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THE GATES OF KNOWLEDGE

WITH AN ADDITIONAL CHAPTER ENTITLED

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHY

BY

RUDOLF STEINER

Ph.D. (Vienna)

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN

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The Gates of Knowledge

CHAPTER I

THE FOUR MODES OF KNOWLEDGE

IN the chapters to which these are a sequel, the Path to the Higher Knowledge has been traced up to the point of meeting with the two Guardians of the Threshold. The relation in which the soul stands to the different worlds, as gradually it climbs the steps of knowledge will now be described. This comprises what may be called "the teachings of Occult Science."

Before man enters the Path of the Higher Knowledge, he only knows the first of its four stages. It is the one which

in ordinary life belongs strictly to the world of the senses. Even in what is called "science," he has to do only with this first grade of knowledge; for such science only deals with ordinary knowledge more minutely and in a disciplined way. By means of instruments such as the microscope, the telescope, etc., he makes the senses more effective, and discloses to them what they could not otherwise perceive. But he is still on the same plane of knowledge, whether he sees large things with the naked eye, or observes very small objects and phenomena by the aid of a microscope. Also in the application of thought to facts and things, such science still remains in the field of every-day life. Man arranges the objects, describes and compares them, seeks to picture to himself their variations, and so forth. The keenest natur-

alist does nothing fundamentally, in this respect, beyond bringing to a fine art the methods of investigating every-day life. His knowledge takes a wider range, becomes more complex and more logical, but he does not come one step nearer to any other mode of cognition.

In Occult Science this first stage of knowledge is called the material mode of cognition. This is followed by three higher; and there are yet others further on. They shall be explained here before proceeding further with the description of the Path of Knowledge. Beginning with the ordinary method of scientific cognition, of apprehension through the senses, we shall have to differentiate the following four stages:

1. Material Knowledge.
2. Imaginative Knowledge.

3. Inspirational, called also "Knowledge of the nature of Will."

4. Intuitive Knowledge.

The stages that follow these will be spoken of later. We must first be quite clear as to what we are dealing with in these different modes of cognition. In the ordinary "sense knowledge" there are four elements to be noticed: (1) The object which makes an impression on the senses; (2) The image which we form of this object; (3) The idea by which we come to a spiritual comprehension of the object or event; (4) The "Ego" which forms for itself the image and idea based on the impression of the object. Before we make for ourselves an image, a representation, there must be an object which causes it. We do not form the object, we only perceive it; and on the basis of

the object is the image formed. As long as we are looking at an object we are dealing with that alone; the moment we turn away, we possess only the image of it. The object is relinquished, but the image remains "fixed" in the memory.

But man cannot stop at the image-making stage,—he must go on to ideas. The distinction between "image" and "idea" is absolutely necessary if we are to be clear at this point. For instance, let us picture to ourselves an object which is circular in form; then turn away, and retain a picture of the circle in the memory. But we have not yet the "conception" of a circle. We only attain this when we say to ourselves: "A circle is a figure in which all points are equi-distant from the centre." We come to the knowledge of a thing only when we have formed a conception of it. There are

many circles—small, large, red, blue, and so forth, but there is only one conception "Circle." This will be more fully dealt with as we proceed; for the present we shall give only an outline of what is necessary in order to distinguish the first four steps in knowledge.

The fourth element which comes under consideration in Material cognition is the "ego." In this is accomplished the union of images and ideas. The ego stores up the image in his memory. If this were not the case, no continuous inner life would be possible. The images of things would remain only so long as the things themselves had some effect on the soul. But the inner life depends upon the linking of one perception with another. The ego finds his way in the world to-day because, with certain objects, the images of similar objects of yesterday re-appear.

It is obvious that the life of the soul would be impossible if we could retain the image of a thing only so long as the thing itself stood before us.

In relation to ideas also, the ego forms the unity. It combines its ideas and in this way makes a survey—arrives at an understanding of the world. This linking up of ideas is what happens when one "forms a judgment." One who has only scattered conceptions does not easily find his way about in the world. All man's activity depends on his capacity to combine conceptions, that is, to form opinions.

The Material mode of cognition consists in receiving through the senses an impression of things together with representations of the outer world. Man has the power of perceiving, or "sensibility." The impression received from "outside"

is also called "sensation." Therefore in "material cognition" four elements have to be considered: Sensation, Image, Conception, Ego. In the next higher stage of knowledge, the impression made upon the physical senses, the "sensation" falls away. There is no longer any outer sense-object. There remain only three of the factors to which man is accustomed in ordinary knowledge: Image, Conception, and Ego. Ordinary knowledge in a healthy individual creates no image and no idea when there is no object present to the outer senses. The ego is then inactive. He who forms images of sensible objects which do not actually exist lives in fantasy.

But the occult student acquires this very faculty of forming images even when no external sense-object is present. Something else in him must take the place of

external objects. He must be able to call up images when no object affects his senses. Something else must take the place of sensation; and this something is Imagination. At this stage, images appear to the occult student exactly the same as if a sensible object were making an impression upon him; they are as vivid and true as sense-images, yet they come, not from the "material" world, but from the world of soul and spirit. The senses then remain entirely inactive. It is evident that this faculty of forming pregnant images without sense-impressions must first be acquired. This is accomplished through meditation, and through the exercises which have been described elsewhere.[1] The man confined to the world of sense, lives within the

[1] See *The Way of Initiation*, by Rudolf Steiner, Ph.D. Third Edition. 237 pp. Cloth, crown 8vo. 3/10 post free.

limits of a sphere of images which have gained access to him through the senses. But the imaginative man has a world of images which he has drawn from a higher source.

A very careful training is necessary in order to distinguish delusion from reality in this higher world of images. When such images first enter a man's mind he is inclined to say: "Ah! that is only fancy; a mere out-flow of my imagination." This is quite comprehensible, for man is accustomed at present to call that alone "real" which, without his own effort, he finds on the sure foundation of the evidence of his senses. And he must first accustom himself to accept as "real" things which are caused in quite another way.

In this matter he cannot be too careful not to fall into fantasy. The

capacity to decide, in these higher regions, what is "real" and what is "illusion," can only come by experience. And this experience must be gained in a quiet, patient inner life. We must be quite prepared to find that at first Illusion plays sorry tricks with us. Everywhere lurks the possibility that images will present themselves which are the result of some delusion of the outer senses, or of abnormal life. All such possibilities must first be done away with. We must first completely arrest the flow of fancy; then alone can we achieve Imagination. When a man has come so far, it will be clear to him that the world which he has thus entered is not only just as real as the world of sense, but much more so.

In the third stage of knowledge, images no longer appear. We have now to deal only with the Conception and the ego.

Whereas in the second stage there was still a world of images around us, reminding us of the moment at which a vivid memory conjures up instantaneously impressions from the outer world, without ourselves receiving such impressions,—in the third stage even such images are absent. Man lives altogether in a spiritual world. Those accustomed to confine themselves to the senses will be tempted to believe this world to be pale and colourless. But this is far from being the case. Neither has the image-world of the second stage anything pale or shadowy about it; though this is what the images of memory for the most part are, when the physical objects have vanished. But the pictures of the Imagination have a vivacity and a comprehensiveness which far surpass those of the shadowy memory-pictures of the sensible world,

and even the gaudy and ever-changing physical world itself. Even this is a mere shadow beside the realm of Imagination.

But how shall we describe the world of the third stage of knowledge? Nothing in the world of sense can give any idea of its wealth and luxuriance. That which was Sensation in the first stage, Imagination in the second, here becomes "Inspiration." Inspiration gives the impression, and the ego forms the idea. If anything at all in the realm of sense can be compared with this world, it is that region opened up to us by the sense of hearing, the world of tones. But now we have to do, not with the tones of earthly music, but with a purely spiritual cadence. One begins to "hear" what is going on at the heart of things. The stone, the plant, and so forth, become

"spiritual words." The world begins to express its true nature to the soul. It sounds grotesque, but it is literally true, that at this stage of knowledge one "hears" in spirit the growing of the grass. The form of the crystal is perceived as sound; the opening blossom "speaks" to man. The inspired man is able to realise the inner nature of things; his soul beholds the resurrection of all things in a new form. He speaks a language which belongs to another world, but which alone can make the every-day world comprehensible.

Lastly, in the fourth stage of knowledge Inspiration also ceases. Of the several factors which man is accustomed to observe in every-day knowledge, the ego alone remains to be considered. The attainment of this stage by the occult student is marked by a very definite

inner experience. This experience manifests itself in the feeling that he no longer stands outside the things and occurrences which he recognises, but is within them. Images are not objects, but only the expression of them. Again, what Inspiration gives is not an object, but only an utterance of it. For that which now lives within the soul is verily the object itself. The ego has poured itself forth over all beings; it has merged itself in them. The life of things in the soul is now Intuition; and when we say of Intuition that "through it man glides into all things," this is literally true.

In ordinary life man has but one "Intuition,"—that is, of the ego itself. For the ego can in no way be perceived from without; it can only be experienced within. A simple consideration will make this fact clear, and it is one which psychologists

have not used so forcibly as might be wished. Insignificant as it may appear, to those who understand it fully it is of the most far-reaching significance. It is as follows: in the outer world the same name may be applied by all to the same thing. Any one may call a table a "table"; a tulip, a "tulip"; or address Mr. Miller as "Mr. Miller." But there is one word which each can apply to himself alone: it is the word "I." No other person can say "I" to me. To every one else I am "you," just as every one else is a "you" to me. Only of myself can I say "I." And this is because each man lives, not outside, but within the "I." And in the same way, in Intuitive Cognition, does a man live in all things. This perception of the ego is the type of all intuitive knowledge. And in order thus to enter into all things, we must clearly

begin by coming out of our self. We must become "selfless" before we can blend the self, the ego, with another being.

Meditation and Concentration form the sure method by which this stage, as the earlier ones, may be reached. But it is essential that these be practised in a quiet and patient way. He who imagines that he can violently and forcibly climb into the higher worlds is greatly mistaken. One who so believed would also make the mistake of expecting the realities of the higher regions to approach him in the same way as those of the sensible world. Rich and vivid as are the worlds to which man may climb, they are rare and subtle, while the world of sense is coarse and rude. The most important thing to be learned is that we must accustom ourselves to regard as "real" something quite other than that which we so desig-

nate in the realm of sense. And this is not altogether easy. Herein lies the reason why so many who would fain tread the Occult Path are frightened away at the first steps. They expect to encounter things like tables and chairs, and find, instead of these, "spirits." And because "spirits" are not like tables and chairs, they take them for "imaginings." The fault lies only in their unfamiliarity with them. We must first acquire the right attitude towards the spiritual world; then shall we not only behold that which is spiritual, but also recognise it. And a great part of occult training is concerned with this right recognition and valuation of the spiritual.

CHAPTER II

THE OCCULT FUNCTIONS OF SLEEP

WE must next consider the state of sleep, if we are to come to any understanding of Imaginative Knowledge. So long as man has attained to no higher stage than Material Cognition, the soul, although it truly lives during sleep, is unable to perceive anything in the world in which it then dwells. It is in this world like a blind man in the world of matter. Such a one lives in the midst of light and colour, but is unable to perceive them. From the outer sense-organs—the eye, the ear, the ordinary activity of the brain, and so forth—the soul, in sleep, has withdrawn.

It receives no impressions through the senses. What, then, is it doing during sleep?

We must realise clearly that in waking life the soul is in a state of constant activity. It takes in the impressions of the outer senses and works upon them: that is its occupation. This ceases during sleep, but the soul is not then idle. Asleep it works upon its own body. This is worn out by the activity of the day, which manifests itself in fatigue. And during sleep the soul occupies itself with its own body in order to prepare it for further waking work. We see by this how essential is good sleep for the maintenance of bodily health. The man who does not sleep sufficiently, does not allow his soul to execute upon the body the needful work of repair; and the consequence of this must be the deterioration

of the body. The forces with which the soul works upon the body in sleep are the same with which it acts during the waking state; only in the latter case they are used to take in impressions from the outer senses and to work upon them.

Now when Imaginative Cognition awakes in man, part of the force expended upon the body in sleep must be employed in another way. By these forces the spiritual sense-organs are formed, which enable the soul, not merely to exist in the higher worlds, but also to take cognisance in them. Thus the soul during sleep works no longer upon the body only, but also upon itself. This result is brought about by meditation and concentration, and also by other exercises. It has already often been stated in my other books, giving the methods for the attainment of the Higher Knowledge,

that the particular directions for these exercises are given only from man to man. No one should undertake such exercises on his own account. For only those who have experience of these things can judge what will be the result, in any individual, of withdrawing the activity of his soul from the body and applying it to a higher purpose.

Meditation, Concentration, and other exercises, cause the soul to withdraw for a time from its connection with the sense-organs. It is then sunk in itself, and its activity is turned inwards. In the first stages of this detachment, its inner activity does not differ greatly from its daily work. The same representations, feelings, and sensations must be employed in the work within as during ordinary life. But the more it accustoms itself to be in a measure blind and deaf to its

physical surroundings, the more it lives within itself, the more fit does it become for the inner achievements. And that which is accomplished by meditation first bears fruit in the condition of sleep. When the soul is freed from the body at night, that which has been quickened in it by the exercises of the day, continues to work. Organs are formed in it, by which it can come into relation with its higher surroundings, in exactly the same way as it has already come into contact with the physical world through the outer organs of sense. Out of the darkness of the nocturnal environment come forth visions of light from the higher worlds. Subtle and intimate is this intercourse at first.

It must always be borne in mind that for a long time to come the act of waking to the light of day will immediately draw

a dense veil over the experiences of the night. The recollection of having perceived something during the night, only very slowly and gradually comes through. For the disciple does not easily learn to pay attention to the delicate images of his soul, which in the course of his development begin to mingle with the common events of every-day sense-life.

At first, such images resemble what one calls the accidental impressions gathered by the soul. Everything depends upon his learning to distinguish what is due to the ordinary world from that which presents itself through his own being as a manifestation from the higher worlds. In a quiet, introspective mental life, he must acquire this discernment. It is necessary that he should first develop a sense of the value and meaning of those intimate soul-images which, like chance

impressions, mingle themselves with daily life, but which are really recollections of the nightly intercourse with a higher world. As soon as one grasps these images roughly and applies to them the standards of the sense-life, they vanish away.

It is clear from what has been said that, owing to this work in a higher world, the soul must withdraw from the body part of the activity formerly bestowed upon it with such care. It leaves it, to a certain extent, alone. And the body needs a substitute for that which the soul did for it before. If it does not obtain such a substitute, it runs the risk of falling a prey to maleficent powers. For we must clearly recognise that man is continually exposed to the influences of his surroundings. In fact, he maintains life only through co-operation with his sur-

roundings. Among these we must consider first the kingdom of visible Nature. Man himself belongs to this visible Nature. If there were no mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms, and no human beings around him, he could not live. If an individual could be imagined as cut off from the earth and lifted up into surrounding space, he must inevitably perish quickly as a physical being, just as the hand will perish if cut off from the body. The illusion of a hand that imagined that it could exist without the body would be no greater than that of a man who maintained that he could live as a physical being without the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, and the rest of humanity.

But besides the above-named kingdoms there are three others, which generally escape the notice of man. These are the

three elemental kingdoms, which stand in a sense below the mineral kingdom. There are beings who do not condense into the mineral condition, but who are none the less present and exert their influence upon man. (Further information concerning these elemental kingdoms will be found in my *Atlantis and Lemuria*,[1] and also in the remarks upon them in my *Theosophy*.) Man is thus exposed to influences from kingdoms of Nature which in a sense must be called invisible. Now when the soul works upon the body, a considerable part of its activity consists in regulating the influences of the elemental kingdoms in such a way that they are beneficial to man. But the instant the soul withdraws part of its activity from

[1] *The Submerged Continents of Atlantis and Lemuria. Their History and Civilisation.* By Rudolf Steiner, Ph.D. The Rajput Press, Chicago; Theosophical Publ., Soc., London.

the body, injurious powers from the elemental kingdoms may get hold of it. Herein lies one of the dangers of the higher evolution. Care must therefore be taken that the body is in itself accessible only to the good influences of the elemental world as soon as the soul is withdrawn from it. If this be disregarded, the ordinary man will be, to a certain extent, physically and morally injured, in spite of having gained access to the higher worlds.

While the soul dwells in the higher regions, pernicious forces steal into the dense physical and etheric bodies. This is the reason why certain bad qualities, which, previous to this higher development, had been held in check by the regulating power of the soul, may now, for lack of such power, become apparent. Men who were formerly of good moral be-

haviour may, under such circumstances, when they enter the higher worlds, reveal all kinds of low propensities,—extreme selfishness, untruthfulness, vindictiveness, wrath, etc. No one need be alarmed by this fact, or deterred from ascending into the higher worlds, but care must be taken to prevent the occurrence of such things. The lower nature of man must be fortified and made inaccessible to the dangerous elemental influences. This can be brought about by the conscious cultivation of certain virtues. These virtues are set forth in the theosophical handbooks dealing with spiritual development; and here we have the reason why they must be carefully sought after. They are the following:

First of all, the pupil must deliberately, continually, and in all things, recognise the imperishable, the lasting; distinguish

it from the perishable, and turn his attention towards it. In all things and in all beings he may assume and discern something which abides when the transitory appearance has vanished. If I see a plant, I can first observe it as it presents itself to the senses; and this no one should neglect to do. For no one will be able to discover the permanent in objects, who has not first made himself thoroughly familiar with their perishable aspect. Those who are continually afraid that to fix their attention on the spiritual and eternal will cause them to lose the freshness and naturalness of life, do not yet understand of what we are really speaking. When I look at a plant in this way, it may become evident to me that there is in it a permanent life-impulse which will re-appear in a new form when the plant before me has long since crum-

bled to dust. This attitude of mind towards things must become thoroughly bound up with our nature. Then we must fix our hearts upon all that is worthy of esteem, and genuine, and learn to value it more highly than that which is fleeting and insignificant. In all our feelings and actions we must take into consideration the value of any one thing in relation to the whole. Thirdly, we must cultivate six qualities: control of thoughts, control of actions, endurance, impartiality, confidence in our surroundings, and inner equilibrium.

Control of the thought-world can be attained if we take the trouble to combat that wandering of the thoughts and feelings which tosses the ordinary man to and fro. In every-day life man is not the master of his thoughts: he is driven by them. And, as a matter of course, it

cannot be otherwise; for life itself rules man and, as a worker, he must yield to the pressure of life. In ordinary life this must be so. But if man would rise into higher worlds, he must set apart at least certain short periods in which to make himself master of his world of thought and feeling. Then, with full inner freedom, he sets a thought in the centre of his soul; whilst ordinarily, ideas were driven into it from without. Then he tries to keep at a distance all other thoughts and feelings, and to add nothing to the first thought except that which he admits of his own will. Such an exercise has a beneficial effect upon the soul, and through it, upon the body. It brings the latter into such a harmonious condition that it evades pernicious influences even when the soul is not directly working upon it.

Control of actions consists in a similar regulation of these by inner freedom. A good beginning is made when we set ourselves to do regularly something which it would not have occurred to us to do in ordinary life. For in the latter, man is driven to action from without. But the smallest action which we undertake of our own innermost initiative, does more for us in the direction of which we are speaking than anything we may do through the pressure of life from without. Endurance consists in deliverance from those moods which may be described as alternating betweeen "exulting to the highest heaven" and "sorrowing even unto death." Man is driven to and fro between all kinds of moods. Pleasure makes him glad; pain depresses him. This finds its justification. But he who seeks the Path to the Higher Knowledge

must be able to moderate both his joy and his sorrow. He must become stable. He must be able to restrain himself in the midst of pleasurable, as well as of painful experiences; he must carry himself with dignity through both. He must never be unmanned or disconcerted. This does not imply any lack of feeling; but only that the man has made for himself a fixed centre in the tide of life which ebbs and flows round about him. He has himself always well in hand.

Another very important quality is the "instinct of affirmation." He will develop this for himself who notices in all things their good, beautiful, and serviceable characteristics; not, in the first place, that which is blameworthy, ugly, perverse. There is a beautiful story among the Persian legends concerning Christ, which illustrates the meaning

of this quality. A dead dog was lying in the road, and Christ was among the passers-by. All the others turned away from the ugly spectacle which the animal presented; but Christ paused to speak admiringly of its beautiful teeth. It is possible to see all things in this way; and he who truly seeks will find even in the most repulsive object something worthy of appreciation. The fruitful principle in everything is not what it lacks, but what it has.

Further, it is important to cultivate the quality of "impartiality." Every one has gained his own experiences, and has formed from them a definite number of opinions by which his life is regulated. And as it is self-evident on the one hand that conduct must be guided according to experience, it is no less important that he who would advance spiritually in the

Higher Knowledge should preserve an unbiased mind towards everything new and unfamiliar that meets him on his way. He will be as cautious as possible with such comments as, "That is impossible," or, "That cannot be." Whatever opinion he may have formed from previous experiences, he will be ready at any moment, when he encounters something new, to form a new opinion. All preference for his private opinion must be given up.

When the five qualities already named have been acquired, a sixth will follow of itself,—namely, the inner equilibrium: the harmony of the spiritual forces. The pupil must find within himself a spiritual centre of gravity, to give him firmness and security amidst all that would draw him hither and thither in life. But he must not shrink from sharing the life around him and letting everything influ-

ence him. Duty does not lie in flight from all the activities of life which draw us in every direction; but rather, on the contrary, in fully giving oneself up to life, and yet at the same time guarding firmly and securely the inner harmony and equilibrium.

Lastly, the seeker must put before him the "will towards liberation." He has acquired it already, who finds within himself the foundation and support of everything that he accomplishes. This is hard to attain, because it involves the maintenance of perfect balance between the opening of the senses to everything great and good, and the simultaneous refusing of all compulsion. We say so lightly: "Freedom is incompatible with influence from without." That the two should be reconciled within the soul,—that is the essential thing. When a man tells me

something and I accept it under the pressure of his authority, I am *not free*. But I am no more free if I close myself to the good which I might obtain in this way. For then the "less good" in my own soul acts as a constraint upon me.

Liberation means, not only that I am free from the constraint of an outside authority, but above all that I am free from my own prejudices, opinions, sensations and emotions. And the right way to attain freedom is not through blind subjection to what is received, but by opening ourselves to the impulse from it, receiving it impartially, so that we may freely acquiesce in it. An outside authority should only influence us so far as to make us say: "I free myself by following what is good in this, and making it my own." An authority based upon Occult Wisdom will never work otherwise than

in this way. It gives whatever it has to give, not in order itself to gain power over the recipient, but solely that he may become richer and freer through the gift.

We have already dwelt upon the significance of these qualities when speaking of the "lotus-flowers."[1] Therein was shown their relation to the development of the twelve-petalled lotus-flower in the region of the heart, and to the currents of the etheric body connected with it. The purport of what has been already stated is that these qualities enable the seeker to dispense with those forces which formerly benefitted the physical body during sleep, and which now, because of his development, must be gradually withdrawn from that task.

[1] See *Initiation and its Results.*

CHAPTER III

THE PUPIL AND HIS TEACHER

IT is impossible to make real progress in the task of penetrating to the higher worlds without going through the stage of Imaginative Knowledge. This by no means implies that in the course of occult training a man is compelled to remain for a given time at the imaginative stage as if it were a class at school through which he is bound to pass. This may be necessary in certain cases, but not in all. It depends entirely upon the experience the occult student has had before beginning his training. It will be shown in the course of this analysis that the spiritual environment of the pupil is of import-

ance with regard to this point, and, what is more, that, according to his relationship to this spiritual environment, very different methods have been instituted for treading the Path of Knowledge.

An understanding of the following particulars may be of the utmost importance to one who is preparing to enter the Path of occult training. These must not be regarded merely as presenting an interesting theory, but as something by which the most varied and practical points of view may be gained by anyone who is sincerely pursuing "the way to the Higher Knowledge."

Those who are seeking their higher evolution are often heard to say: "I wish to perfect myself spiritually; I wish to develop the 'Higher Self' within me; but I have no desire for the manifestations of the astral world." This is understand-

able enough when we read the descriptions of the astral world in books treating of such things, for apparitions and entities are spoken of in these which bring all sorts of dangers to men. It is often said that under the influence of such beings a man may very easily suffer injury both morally and intellectually. It is brought home to the reader that in these regions the wall dividing the good from the evil path is as a spider's web in thickness, and that the plunge into immeasurable depths, the fall into utter depravity, lies extremely near. It is impossible simply to contradict these assertions. Yet the standpoint taken in many cases, with regard to the treading of the occult Path, is by no means a right one. The only reasonable point of view is that which enables us to say that no one should be deterred from entering the Path of the Higher Know-

ledge because of the dangers incidental to it; but that in every case great care must be taken that these dangers be avoided. It will, of course, in many cases follow that a man who asks advice from an occult teacher in the matter of training will be counselled to postpone the actual training for a while, and first to go through certain experiences of ordinary life, or to learn certain things which are to be learned in the physical world. It will then be the task of the occult teacher to give the seeker the right instructions to enable him to gather suitable experience and learn the necessary things.

In by far the greater number of cases, a student will find that the occult teacher proceeds in this way. And if the student now becomes sufficiently attentive to what befalls him, after he has come into contact with the occult teacher, he will

make the most varied observations. He will find that henceforth curious things happen to him as if by accident, and that he has opportunities for observing occurrences which would never have come to him without this link with the occult teacher. If students do not notice this, and become impatient, it is because they have not paid sufficient attention to what has happened to them. It is not to be imagined that the influence of the teacher upon the student will show itself in distinctly visible works of magic. This influence is, on the contrary, a very intimate matter; and he who would explore its nature and form without having first reached a certain stage of occult training, is sure to fall into error. The student injures himself in every case in which he becomes impatient because he is placed on probation. His advance will be none

the less rapid on this account. On the contrary, his progress would be rendered slower if he were to begin too soon the training to which he so impatiently looks forward.

If the student allows the time of probation, or the counsels and hints given to him by the occult teacher, to influence him rightly, he will be actually preparing himself to withstand certain trials and dangers which he will encounter when he approaches the inevitable stage of Imagination. This stage is unavoidable, for this reason:—Every one who seeks communication with the higher worlds without having passed through it, can only do so unconsciously, and is condemned when he reaches them to grope in the dark. One can acquire some dim sense of these higher worlds without Imagination; one can without it certainly attain to a feeling

of being united with one's "God" or "Higher Self"; but one cannot come to a true knowledge in full consciousness and bright translucent clearness. Therefore, all that is said to the effect that the expositions regarding the "lower worlds" (the astral and devachanic) are useless, that the one thing needful is that man should "awaken the God within him," is entirely misleading. Whoever is satisfied with such standpoints should not be interfered with in his strivings, and no occultist would seek to do this. True Occultism has, however, nothing to do with such strivings; nor, on the other hand, does it invite anybody directly to become a pupil. But in him who craves the discipline of the occultist, the latter will not only awaken in him a mere dim perception of his "divinity," but will also endeavour to open his spiritual eyes to

that which is actually existent in the higher worlds.

Of course, the "Divine Self" exists in every human being, and not in man alone, but in every created thing. In stone, plant, and animal, the "Divine Self" is inherent and active. What is of importance is not so much the general recognition of this fact, but rather the actual entrance into union with the manifestations of this "Divine Self." Just as a man knows nothing of the physical world so long as he can only repeat again and again: "This world contains the 'Divine Self' veiled within it,"—in like manner does he who seeks the "divine kingdoms of spirit" as vague and indefinite generalities know nothing of the higher worlds. We should open our eyes and behold the divine manifestation in the things of the physical world, in the stone and in

the plant, and not indulge in dreams depicting everything as mere "phenomena" behind which the real form of God lies concealed. No; God reveals Himself in His creations, and he who would know God must learn to know the true nature of these creations.

Therefore must we also learn actually to behold what exists and happens in the higher worlds, if we would know the "Divine Nature." The consciousness that the "Divine Man" dwells within us can be at most but a beginning; but this consciousness experienced aright, becomes a spur to the definite ascent into the higher worlds. This can be truly accomplished only when the necessary spiritual senses have been developed. Every other point of view is, merely: "I will remain as I am, and only attain to that which is within the reach of such powers

as I have developed already." But the aim of the occultist is to become a different being in order to behold and experience things of a different nature from those of ordinary life.

And it is precisely for this purpose that the stage of Imaginative Knowledge must be experienced. It has already been said that this "imaginative" stage need not be looked upon as a class at school which one must pass through. What is to be understood is this:—There are, particularly in the present generation, many who have brought over with them such conditions as enable the occult teacher to call forth in them at the same time, or nearly so, imaginative, inspirational, and intuitive knowledge. But we are not to understand that in the case of any individual the passage through the imaginative stage may be dispensed with.

The cause of the dangers inherent in Imaginative Knowledge has already been hinted at in previous chapters. It lies in the fact that on his entrance into super-physical worlds a man, in a certain sense, sees the ground vanish from under his feet. That which gave him security in the physical world has apparently quite disappeared. When we perceive anything in the physical world, we ask ourselves: Whence comes this perception? We do this in most cases unconsciously. But we are quite satisfied "unconsciously" that the causes of the perception are the objects "outside us, in space." Colours, sounds, and odours proceed from these objects. We do not see colours floating about in space, or hear sounds, without being able to satisfy ourselves regarding the objects to which these colours pertain as qualities, and from

which these tones proceed. This consciousness, that they are caused by objects and entities, gives to physical perceptions, and thereby to man himself, a sense of security, a sure hold. If one has perceptions without any outward cause, they are considered abnormal and morbid. Such unaccountable perceptions are called illusions, hallucinations, visions.

Now primarily, from a purely external point of view, the whole imaginative world consists of such hallucinations, visions, and illusions. It has been pointed out how, through occult training, such visions are artificially produced.[1] By focussing the consciousness on a seed or a dying plant, certain forms are conjured up in the soul, which, to begin with, are nothing but hallucinations. The "flame-

[1] See *The Way of Initiation.*

formation" which was spoken of as being produced in the soul through the observation of a plant or other object, and which after a time completely separates itself from the plant, must, from the material standpoint, be regarded as in the nature of hallucination. It is the same in the imaginative world when we enter upon occult training. That which we were accustomed to regard as proceeding from things outside in space,—as clinging to such things as properties, colours, sounds, odours, and so forth,—now floats freely by itself in space. Perceptions detach themselves from all external objects and float or soar apart. And here we know for a certainty that these perceptions have not produced the things which we see before us, but that on the contrary, we "ourselves" have produced them. And so it comes about that one

seems to have "lost one's foothold." In ordinary life, in the physical world, we have to be on our guard against those representations which do not proceed from objects, and which are, so to speak, without any foundation. But for the calling forth of Imaginative Knowledge, the important thing at first is to perceive colours, sounds, odours, etc., which, detached from everything, float freely in space.

The next step towards Imaginative Knowledge is to find a new cause for such wandering conceptions. And this must be done in that other world which is about to be revealed. New objects and beings appropriate these representations. In the physical world, for instance, the colour "blue" clings to the cornflower, and similarly in the imaginative world it must cleave to something real. It rushes forth,

as it were, towards some being, and whereas it floated unattached at first, it now becomes the expression of that being. Something speaks through it to the observer, which he can only perceive in the imaginative world. And so these free floating pictures gather round a definite centre, and we know that beings are speaking to us through them. And, as in the physical world we find corporeal things and beings to which colours, sounds, odours, etc., are attached, or from which they are derived, we now discover spiritual beings who express themselves through those colours, tones, etc. These "spiritual beings" are, in fact, always present; they hover round us continually. But they cannot reveal themselves to us if we do not give them an opportunity to do so. And we can only give them this opportunity by evok-

ing within ourselves the capacity to call up colours, sounds, etc., in our soul, even when no physical object gives rise to them.

Entirely different from the objects and entities of the physical world are the "spiritual facts and beings." It is not easy to find in ordinary speech an expression which even remotely describes this difference. Perhaps we may best approach it by saying that in the imaginative world everything speaks to man as if it were directly intelligent; while in the physical world intelligence can only reveal itself indirectly through corporeality. It is just this that gives mobility and freedom to the imaginative world: The intermediary member, viz., the outward object, is absent, and the spiritual is able to live immediately in the free-flowing colours, sounds, and so on.

Now one of the dangers that threatens man in this world lies in the fact that he perceives these manifestations of "spiritual beings," but not the beings themselves. This at least is the case so long as he remains in the imaginative world only and does not ascend to a higher one. It is Inspiration and Intuition which lead him by degrees to the beings themselves. If, however, the occult teacher should awaken these prematurely, without having thoroughly acquainted the pupil with the realm of imagination, the higher world would have for him only a shadowy and phantasmal existence. The whole glorious fullness of the pictures in which it must reveal itself when he really enters it, would be lost. In this lies the reason why the occult student needs a "Guide," or "Guru," as this guide is called in Occult Science.

For the pupil, the imaginative world is at first only a world of pictures, of which, to a great extent, he does not know the meaning. But the "Guru" knows to what things and beings these pictures are related in the higher world. If the pupil has confidence in him he will know that connecting links, which for the present he cannot discern, will reveal themselves to him later. In the physical world, the objects in space were themselves his guides. He was in a position to prove the accuracy of his ideas. The corporeal reality is the "rock" upon which all hallucinations and illusions must be shattered. This rock disappears, as soon as we enter the imaginative world. Therefore the "Guru" must himself become its substitute. The Teacher must realise for his pupil the actuality of the new world. From this we may estimate how

great must be the pupil's confidence in the Guru in any occult training worthy of the name. As soon as he can no longer believe in the Guru, it is as though in the physical world he were suddenly deprived of everything on which he had built his faith in the reality of his perceptions.

Apart from this, there is yet another difficulty which may confuse the pupil, if he seeks to enter the imaginative world without the guidance of a Teacher. For the occult student has, first and foremost, to learn to know himself as distinct from all other spiritual beings. In physical life a man has feelings, desires, longings, passions, ideas, etc., of his own. These are, indeed, all caused by the things and beings of the outer world, but the man knows quite definitely that they make up his inner world, and he recognises them as something happening within his

soul, distinct from the objects of the world outside.

But as soon as the imaginative sense is awakened, this facility of distinction completely ceases. His own feelings, ideas, passions, etc., literally step outside him, and take on form, sound, and colour. His attitude with regard to them is now the same as it is with reference to absolutely strange objects and beings in the physical world. And it is easy to understand how complete the confusion may be when we remember what has been said on this point in a previous chapter, the whole of which was occupied in describing how the imaginative world presents itself to the observer. For there everything appears reversed as in a mirror. That which goes forth from the man himself appears as if it were approaching him from without. A wish which he fosters

changes into a form, into that of some fantastic-looking animal, for instance, or perhaps into the appearance of a human entity. This seems to assail him, to make an attack on him, or to cause him to do one thing or another. So it may come about that the man appears to himself as if surrounded by a wholly fantastic, often charming and seductive, but also often horrible, world of fluttering forms.

In reality these are nothing but his own thoughts, wishes, and passions, changed into pictures which he sees. It would be a great mistake to suppose that it is easy to distinguish these pictures of the transformed self from the true spiritual world. At first it is absolutely impossible for the pupil to make this distinction. For the picture which speaks to the man may be exactly the same, whether it springs from some spiritual

being or from something within his own soul. And if a man hurries his development unduly at this point, there is a danger that he may never rightly learn to separate the two. It is imperative in this matter that he should exercise the greatest care.

The confusion is rendered still greater by the fact that the wishes and desires of his own soul clothe themselves in images conveying an absolutely contrary character to that which they really bear. Let us suppose, for instance, that Vanity comes before us as a picture in this manner: it may appear perhaps as a lovely figure, promising the most wonderful things if we execute its behests. The suggestions it makes appear to promise something altogether good and desirable; if we follow them it will bring about our ruin, moral or otherwise. Conversely,

a good quality of the soul can veil itself in unprepossessing garb. Only to him who truly *knows* is it possible to distinguish the one from the other. Only a personality who cannot be made to falter in pursuit of a right aim is secure against the seductive power of his own soul-images.

Having regard to all this, it will readily be seen how necessary is the guidance of a Teacher who, with unerring judgment, draws his pupil's attention both to the illusions and realities in this region. But we need not suppose that the Guru must always stand, as it were, behind the pupil. The immediate presence of the Teacher is not the most important matter for the occult student. Of course there are moments when such "being together in space" is desirable, and even when it is absolutely necessary. But on the other

hand, the occult Teacher finds means of remaining in touch with the pupil even when separated by distance. And besides, it must be observed that much of what passes between Teacher and pupil when they meet may be effectual often for months and probably for years afterwards. One thing there is, however, which will break this necessary link between Teacher and pupil without fail. This happens when the latter loses confidence in his Teacher. And it is especially unfortunate if this bond of confidence is broken before the pupil has learned to distinguish between the delusive reflections of his own soul and true reality.

It may here, perhaps, be said: "Yes, but if a tie is formed with the Guru in this way, the occult student loses all freedom and independence. He gives himself, so to speak, entirely into the hands of the

Guru." This, however, is not the case. There is certainly a difference among the various methods of occult training in respect of this dependence on the Guru. The dependence may be greater or less. It is relatively greatest in the methods followed by Oriental occultists, and taught by them even to-day as their own. This dependence is proportionately less in the so-called Christian Initiation; and, in reality, it is completely in abeyance on that Path of Knowledge which has been known since the fourteenth century as the Rosicrucian School of Occultism. In this the Guru can by no means be abolished,—that is impossible; but the entire dependence on him ceases. How this is practicable will be shown in the following chapters. Therein we shall explain precisely how these three "Paths of Knowledge" differ,—the Oriental, the Christian,

and the Rosicrucian. In this last there is nothing which could interfere in any way with a modern man's sense of freedom. It will also be seen how it may happen that one person or another as an occult student, even to-day in modern Europe, may follow, not the Rosicrucian, but the Oriental Path, or the early Christian; though, for the present time, the Rosicrucian is the most natural. And this way, as will presently be seen, is by no means non-Christian. A man may follow this Path without endangering his Christianity; and he, too, may follow it who believes himself to have adopted that theory of the world which is identified with modern science.

One other point, perhaps, needs to be cleared up. We may feel tempted to ask whether the occult student might not be spared the experience of the delusive

reflections of his own soul. But if this happened he would never attain to the independent discernment so desirable for him. For by no other means can the peculiar nature of the imaginative world be so well realised as by the observation of one's own soul. At first a man knows the inner life of his soul only from one side,—that he begins by being within it. And this is just what the pupil has to learn, not only to look at things from outside, but to observe them as if he himself were within all of them. Now, if his own thought-world comes upon him as something strange, he learns to know a new aspect of that of which formerly he knew but one side. He must, in a certain sense, himself serve as the first example of this mode of Knowledge.

Here in the physical world he is accustomed to something quite different. Here

he looks upon all things from without; himself alone he knows only from within. So long as he remains in the physical world he can never see below the surface of things; and he can never get outside himself,—"slip out of his skin," as it were —in order to observe himself from without. And this is literally incumbent upon him before all else in occult training; by the help of this he learns to look beneath the surface of external facts and beings.

CHAPTER IV

INSPIRATION

THE description of the power of Imagination has shown us how the occult student, by its means, leaves the region of outer sense-experiences. This is the case in a much higher degree with Inspiration. Here ideas are much less dependent upon what may be called an outside stimulus. The individual must find within himself the power which enables him to form ideas concerning things. He must be inwardly active to a far greater extent than is the case with regard to outer knowledge. For the latter he simply yields himself to impressions from without, and these give rise to ideas within

him. This kind of surrender ceases when we come to Inspiration. Henceforward the eye does not supply colours, the ear sounds, and so forth. The whole content of ideas must, in a sense, be produced by individual activity, and by purely spiritual and psychic processes. And the manifestation of the higher, the real world must be impressed upon what the man has created by his inner activity.

A peculiar contradiction seems to be involved in such a description of the world of higher cognition. The individual must, in a certain sense, be the creator of his own ideas; yet obviously his ideas should not be solely of his own creation, but the processes of the higher worlds should be expressed through them, just as the events of the lower world are expressed through the perceptions of the eyes, ears, and other organs.

Such a contradiction is, however, inevitable in any description of this mode of cognition. For this is exactly what the occult student must achieve on the path of Inspiration: he must attain by his inner activity to something to which in ordinary life he is compelled from without. Why do not the images of ordinary life take an arbitrary course? Because the individual has to correct his attitude towards outward objects by means of the ideas they give him. All choice on the part of the ego is suppressed because the objects say: We are thus, or thus. The objects themselves decide how they shall be understood; the ego has nothing to say in the matter. The man who will not adjust himself to the objects, misunderstands them and will soon be made to feel how little success he has had in the world. This necessary attitude of the individual

to the things of the outer world may be designated in cognition as "self-less." The individual must maintain a selfless attitude towards things; and the outer world is his instructor in this selflessness. It deprives him of all illusions, fancies, and illogical opinions, and of everything non-essential, by simply putting the correct image before his senses.

If any man would prepare himself for Inspiration, he must first develop his inner nature to such a point that this selflessness is natural to him, even when uncompelled from without. He must learn to create inwardly, but in such a way that the ego plays no arbitrary part in this creation. The difficulties which have to be taken into account in attaining such a degree of selflessness, become more apparent the more we consider what powers of the soul are specially

required for Inspiration. We recognise three fundamental powers in the life of the soul,—Idea, Feeling, and Will. In ordinary cognition by the senses, ideas are induced by outward objects; and these externally-stimulated ideas will determine the direction taken by feeling and will.

For instance, a man sees an object which gives him pleasure and he begins to long for the thing in question. Pleasure is rooted in feeling and through feeling the will is roused, just as feeling was awakened by the image of the thing. But the external object is the ultimate cause of the image, the feeling, and the will. Take another instance. A man sees an occurrence which frightens him. He rushes away from the scene of the event. Here, too, the outward incidents are the primary cause; they are perceived by

means of the senses; images are formed; they give rise to ideas; the feeling of alarm springs up; and Will—expressing itself in running away—is the result. In Inspiration there is no longer an outward object of this kind. The senses are no longer needed in order to perceive. Therefore they cannot be the cause of ideas. From this side no influence is exercised upon feeling and will. Yet it is precisely from these two, as from their native soil, that in the Inspirational mode ideas spring up inwardly, and, so to speak, grow. And if the native soil is healthy, the ideas that spring up will be true; if unhealthy, they will be errors and illusions.

As certainly as Inspirations, rooted in healthy feeling and will, may be a revelation from a higher world, so certainly do mistakes, delusions, and errors concern-

ing a higher world, spring from disorderly feeling and will.

On this account occult training sets itself the task of pointing out the way by which a man may make his feelings and the impulses of his will healthily productive for Inspiration. As in all matters of occult training, we have here to deal with the intimate regulation and fashioning of the life of the soul. First of all the student must develop certain feelings which are very little known in ordinary life. Some of these feelings may here be indicated. One of the most important consists in an increased sensitiveness with regard to the "true" and "false," and the "right" and "wrong." It is quite true that the ordinary person has similar feelings. But they must be cultivated by the occult student to a very much higher degree.

Let us suppose that a logical error has been made by some one. Another sees the mistake and puts the matter right. Let us realise how large a part is played by the judgment and understanding in such a correction, and how slight is the feeling of pleasure at what is true and repugnance to what is false. Observe that we are not by any means maintaining that the pleasure and corresponding repugnance are not there. But the degree in which they are present in ordinary life must be immeasurably raised in occult training. The student must direct his attention quite systematically to the life of his soul; and he must carry this training to such a point that a logical error is a source of pain to him, in no way falling short of physical pain; and on the other hand what is "right" must afford him real joy and pleasure.

Thus, where another only brings his judgment and understanding into play, the occult student must learn to live through the whole gamut of emotions, from grief to enthusiasm, and from painful suspense to transports of delight in the possession of truth. In fact, he must learn to feel something like hatred for what the "normal" man looks upon coldly and dispassionately as "incorrect." He must develop such a love of truth as bears quite a personal character,—as personal and as warm as that which the lover feels for the beloved.

We hear, indeed, a great deal in our "cultured" circles about the love of truth; but what is meant by this is not to be compared with what the occult student must attain in this direction through quiet inward work in his soul. As a test, he must continually and patiently put before

him this or that "true" thing and this or that "false" one, and concentrate upon it, not merely for the sake of training his judgment to distinguish dispassionately between "true" and "false," but in order to acquire a completely personal relation to it all. There is no doubt that at the beginning of such training the student may fall into what may be called over-sensitiveness. An erroneous opinion uttered in his hearing, an inconsistency, etc., may cause him almost intolerable pain.

Care must therefore be taken during training with regard to this matter; otherwise there would be great danger to the psychic equilibrium. If care is taken that the character be steadfast, storms may occur in the life of the soul and yet the man may have the power to conduct himself harmoniously towards the outer

world. It is a mistake in this respect to allow the occult student to be brought into opposition to the outer world, so that he finds it unbearable, or even wishes to flee from it. The higher world of feeling should not be cultivated at the expense of well-balanced work and activity in the outer world; therefore a strengthening of the power of resistance to outward impressions must counterbalance the inward elevation of the life of feeling.

Practical occult training directs the student never to undertake the above-mentioned exercises for developing the realm of feeling without at the same time schooling himself in such a way that he will learn what life demands from men in the way of toleration. He must be able to feel the keenest pain if a person gives utterance to an erroneous opinion, and yet at the same time be perfectly tolerant

towards this person, because the thought in his mind is equally clear, that "this person is bound to judge in this way, and his opinion must be reckoned with as a fact."

It is, of course, true that the inner nature of the occult scientist comes to be more and more involved in a double life. Ever richer experiences are lived through in his soul in the course of his pilgrimage through life, and the other world gradually becomes more and more independent of what this outer world has to give. And it is just this double existence that will be most fruitful in the genuine practice of life. What results from it is swiftness of judgment and unerring certainty of decision. While one who is a stranger to such schooling must go through long trains of thought and be driven backwards and forwards between reso-

lution and perplexity, the occult scientist will swiftly review the conditions of life and discern hidden relations not seen by the ordinary gaze. Often he needs much patience in order to enter into the lengthy methods by which something is made clear to another person, while his own comprehension is swift as an arrow.

Hitherto we have spoken only of the qualities which must be developed in the life of feeling in order that Inspiration may begin in the right way. The next question is:—How do the feelings become productive, so as to bring forth true ideas belonging to the world of Inspiration? If a man desires to know what answer Occult Science gives to this question, he must be made acquainted with the fact that the soul-life of man has always a certain store of feelings over and above those that are aroused by sense-perceptions.

The individual feels far more than anything compels him to feel. But in ordinary life this excess of feeling is turned in a direction which occult training must change for another.

Take, for instance, a feeling of fear or anxiety. In many cases it is quite easy to see that the fear or anxiety is greater than it would be if it were in true proportion to the corresponding outward event. Let us imagine that the student is working energetically on himself with the object that he may not in any case feel more fear and anxiety than is justified by an outward event. Now a given amount of fear or anxiety always involves an expenditure of psychic force. This force is actually lost when fear or anxiety is produced. The student really saves this force when he denies himself fear, anxiety, or other wasteful feelings. And it remains

at his disposal for some other purpose. If he repeats the process often he will acquire an inner store of this continually husbanded psychic force; and he will soon find that out of such economies of feeling will spring the germs of those ideas which will give utterance to the revelations of the higher life. Such things cannot in the ordinary sense be "proved"; one can only give the occult student advice to do this or that, and if he carries out the instructions he will presently see the indubitable results.

From a casual view of what has just been described, it might easily appear self-contradictory to say that on the one hand an enrichment of the world of feeling is necessary,—since feelings of pleasure or pain are to be excited by what otherwise arouses only intellectual judgment,—and that on the other hand it is

economy of feeling that is spoken of. This contradiction at once disappears if it is borne in mind that the saving should be made in those feelings which are aroused by the outer senses. Whatever is saved in that direction serves as an enrichment in the matter of spiritual experiences. And it is altogether just that the feelings thus economised in the sense-world of perception should not only be set free in another sphere, but should prove creative in that sphere. They provide the material for those ideas by which the spiritual world is revealed.

Of course it would not be going very far if we were to remain content with only such economies as have been indicated. Much more is necessary if great results are to be attained. A larger store of the force which begets feeling must be conveyed to the soul than is possible by

this means alone. For instance, we must, as a test, submit ourselves to certain outward impressions and then wholly deny ourselves the feelings which would arise in a so-called "normal" condition. We must confront an occurrence which "normally" stimulates the soul, and absolutely forbid ourselves to be excited by it. This can be done either by actually experiencing such an event, or by experiencing it only in the imagination. The latter process is even better for an occult training that is to bear fruit.

As the student is initiated into the power of imagination, either before his preparation for the inspirational mode or simultaneously with it, he should actually be in a position to represent an occurrence to his mind as powerfully as if it were taking place before him. If, therefore, by long inward labour the

student subjects himself more and more to the influence of objects and events and yet denies himself the normal feelings corresponding to them, the ground will be prepared for Inspiration in his soul. Let it be incidentally noted here that he who is describing such a training for Inspiration has the fullest justification for it, though many objections might be made to his account of it from the point of view of our present-day culture. And not only can objections be made, but people may smile in a superior way and say: "But Inspiration cannot be pedantically taught; it is a natural gift of genius."

Yes, it may certainly seem almost laughable, from the standpoint of modern culture, to discuss so fully a development which that culture will not admit to be capable of explanation; but such culture does not realise how little it is able to pur-

sue to their logical ends its own processes of thought. Any one who required a disciple of this culture to believe that some more highly developed animal had not slowly evolved, but had appeared suddenly, would speedily be told that no cultured person in the modern sense of the term could believe such a miracle. Such a belief would be "superstition." Yet such a person is the victim of gross superstition in matters of spiritual life, even according to his own way of thinking. That is to say, he will not allow that a more perfected soul must also have evolved slowly,—that it could not have arisen suddenly as a gift of nature. Of course, externally, many a genius appears to have been born suddenly "out of nowhere" in some mysterious way; but it only appears so on account of materialistic superstition; the occult scientist

knows that the condition of genius, which arises in a man's life as if out of nothing, is simply the result of his training on inspirational lines during a former life on earth.

Materialistic superstition is bad enough on theoretical ground; but it is far worse in a practical region such as this. As it assumes that in all ages genius must "fall from heaven," it will have nothing to say to any "occult nonsense" or "fantastic mysticism" as a preparation for Inspiration. In this way the superstition of the materialist retards the real progress of humanity. He does not trouble himself about the latent faculties evolving in man. In reality it is often precisely those who call themselves progressives and liberal thinkers who are the enemies of real forward development. But this, as already said, is only an incidental comment,

necessary with regard to the relationship of Occult Science to present-day culture.

Now the soul powers which are stored up in the student's inner nature by the self-denial of the normal feelings indicated above, would undoubtedly be transmuted into Inspiration even if no further aid were given them. And in the soul of the occult student there would arise true images of events taking place in the higher worlds. Progress would begin with the simplest experiences of super-sensible events, followed gradually by those of a higher and more complicated aspect, if the student continued to live inwardly in the prescribed way.

But, as a matter of fact, such occult training would be quite impracticable to-day, and when a man has set himself seriously to work it is never carried through to its conclusion. That is to say,

if the student wished to develop out of his inner nature everything that Inspiration can give, he could undoubtedly "spin out" from within himself everything, for example, that has been said in my other works about the nature of man, the life after death, the evolution of humanity and of the planets, and so forth. But such a student would need an immeasurably long time for all this. It would be as if a man should wish to weave the whole of geometry out of himself, without regard to what has already been achieved in that field before him. Certainly in theory it is quite possible for him to do so; but to carry it out in practice would be folly. Nor is this the method of Occult Science;—the facts which have been won for humanity by inspired predecessors have been handed down through a teacher. Such tradi-

tion must in fact furnish the basis for individual Inspiration.

That which is being given out to-day in lectures and writings from the domain of Occult Science may well furnish such a basis for Inspiration. There is, for instance, the teaching about the various component parts of man (physical body, etheric body, astral body, etc.), the knowledge concerning life after death until a new incarnation, and much else which has been published under the title, "From The Âkâshic Records" (see *Atlantis and Lemuria*). That is to say, we must clearly grasp the fact that Inspiration is needed for the discovery and experience of the higher truths, but not for the understanding of them. What has been communicated in *Atlantis and Lemuria* could not at first be discovered without Inspiration. But when

once communicated it can be understood by the ordinary reasoning faculty. No one should assert that facts are there stated which cannot be logically understood without Inspiration. People do not find them incomprehensible because they themselves are not inspired, but because they will not think enough about them.

Further, when a man receives the truths so communicated, they awaken Inspiration in his soul by their own power. If we wish to participate in such Inspiration, we must not merely receive the knowledge in a logical and matter-of-fact way, but must lay ourselves open to be carried by the flight of ideas into all kinds of emotional experiences. And why should not this be possible? Can the feelings remain passive when there passes before the spirit's gaze the overpowering

process of the development of the earth from the Moon, Sun, and Saturn? or when the infinite depths of human nature are penetrated by the knowledge of man's etheric, astral, and yet subtler bodies? We might almost say it is ill with him who can contemplate unmoved such structures of thought. For if he no longer regarded them dispassionately, but experienced all the tension and relaxation of feeling, all the climaxes and crises, all the advances and retreats, all the catastrophes and dispensations which they render possible, then indeed the ground would be prepared for Inspiration in his soul. True, the necessary emotional life corresponding with such communications from a higher world can only be fully unfolded by exercises of the kind indicated above.

Reports of such a world will appear

but arid notions and dull theories to one who directs all his emotional forces towards the outer world of sense. He will never be able to understand why the heart of another man is warmed by the hearing of what is imparted by Occult Science while his own inmost being remains cold. He will even say: "But all that is for the intellect and reason; I want something for my emotional nature." He does not say to himself that it is his own fault if his heart remains cold.

Many people still undervalue the power of what lies hidden in these communications which can come only from a higher world. And in this connection they overrate all kinds of other exercises and practices. "Of what use is it to me," they say, "to hear from others what the higher worlds look like? I want to look into them

for myself." Such persons, for the most part, lack the patience to concentrate themselves again and again upon such reports from higher worlds. If they did so, they would see what kindling force lies in these bare reports, and how one's own Inspiration may be awakened by hearing an account of the Inspiration of others.

It is true that other exercises must supplement mere learning if the student wishes to make rapid progress in the experience of the higher worlds; but no one should underestimate the very great importance of such learning. And in any case, no hope can be held out of making rapid conquests in the higher worlds by any exercises whatever, unless the student resolves at the same time unremittingly to ponder over the communications which have been given, in their proper order, from a competent source, as to

the events and beings of the higher worlds.

Now that such communications are being made in lectures, literature, etc., and the first indications are also being given as to the exercises leading to knowledge of the higher worlds (as, for instance, in my book, *The Way of Initiation*), it has become possible to learn something of what formerly was imparted only in strictly guarded occult schools. As has already been said, it is owing to the special conditions of our time that these things are and must be published. But we must once more emphasise this point,—that although facilities have been given for the acquisition of occult knowledge, trustworthy guidance by an experienced occult teacher is not at present to be dispensed with.

The Inspirational mode of Knowledge

leads to the actual experience of processes in the invisible worlds,—as, for instance, the evolution of man and of the earth and its former embodiments ("Moon," "Sun," and "Saturn"). But when in these higher worlds not only processes but beings have to be taken into account, then the Intuitional mode of Knowledge must enter in. That which occurs through the agency of such beings is discerned by Imagination as in a picture; laws and conditions are discerned by Inspiration; but if the beings themselves are to be approached, Intuition is needed.

We shall speak later of the way in which Inspiration is organised in the world of Imagination,—how it penetrates that world as a spiritual music and thereby becomes a means of expression to the beings who are to be recognised by Intuition. Intuition itself will also then be

treated of. We would only point out here that what is known in Occult Science as "Intuition" has nothing to do with what often receives that name in popular speech. A more or less uncertain notion is there put in contradistinction to a clear understanding logically arrived at through the intellect. Intuition in Occult Science is nothing vague or uncertain, but a lofty method of cognition, full of the most luminous clearness and indubitable certainty.

CHAPTER V

INSPIRATION AND INTUITION

JUST as Imagination may be called spiritual seeing, so may Inspiration be called spiritual hearing. We must of course be quite clear in our minds that by the expression "hearing" is signified a form of perception as far removed from sense-hearing in the physical world, as "sight" in the imaginative or astral world is from seeing with the physical eyes.

We may say of the light and colour phenomena of the astral world that they are as if the luminous surfaces and colours of sense-objects stood out from these objects, and, detached from them, floated

freely in space. But this gives only an approximate idea; for "space" in the imaginative world is by no means the same as in the physical. Therefore it is a mistake to believe that we are seeing colour-pictures made by the imaginative faculty when we are observing only detached specks of colour floating in ordinary space. Nevertheless the building of such colour-images is the way to the imaginative life.

Anyone who tries to picture to himself a flower, and then reject from the image everything that is not colour, so that a picture as of the detached colour-surface of the flower floats before his mind, may gradually acquire the imaginative faculty by means of such exercises. This is not in itself the imaginative picture, but is a more or less preparatory fantasy-picture. Imagination—that is, genuine astral ex-

perience—does not come until not only is colour detached from sense-impression, but three-dimensional space has completely disappeared. That this has happened, can be realised only by a certain kind of feeling, which is best described by saying that one no longer feels "outside" but "inside" the colour-image, and has the consciousness of taking part in its genesis. If this feeling is absent, if we seem to be looking at the thing as we look at a physical colour-picture, then we are not yet dealing with genuine Imagination, but with something purely fanciful.

But it must not be said that such fancy pictures are altogether worthless. They may, for instance, be etheric images,—shadows, as it were, of genuine astral facts; and as such they have value in occult training. They may form a bridge to genuine astral imaginative experiences,

but they involve a certain amount of danger to the observer on this borderland between the senses and the sensible, unless he brings sound judgment fully into play. It is not to be expected that an unfailing test can be given to every one, whereby he may distinguish reality from illusions, hallucinations, and fancies on this borderland. Such a general rule would certainly be convenient, but convenience is a word which the occult student should expunge from his vocabulary.

It can only be said that he who wishes to acquire clear discrimination in this sphere must in the first place cultivate discrimination in the ordinary life of the physical world. The man who takes no pains to think definitely and clearly in ordinary life will fall a victim to all manner of illusions when he ascends to higher worlds. We have only to consider how

many snares beset sound judgment in ordinary affairs. How often it happens that people do not see calmly what exists, but what they wish to see! In how many cases do they believe a thing, not because they have comprehended it, but because it pleases them to believe it! And what mistakes arise because people will not sift a thing to the bottom, but form a hasty opinion! All these causes of error in ordinary life might be multiplied indefinitely. What tricks are played on sound judgment by party feeling, passion, and prejudice! If such errors of judgment in ordinary life are disturbing and often momentous in their consequences, they are the greatest imaginable danger to the sanity of the super-sensible life. No general rule can be given to the student for his guidance in the higher worlds, beyond the injunction to do everything

possible to develop a healthy power of discrimination and a sound and independent judgment.

When the observer in the higher worlds once knows what Imagination really is, he very soon acquires the conviction that the images of the astral world are not merely images, but manifestations of spiritual beings. He comes to know that these imaginative pictures belong just as much to spiritual or psychic beings as do physical colours to physical beings or objects. As regards details he will, of course, have much to learn. He must learn to discriminate between colour-pictures which are opaque and those which are quite transparent, and, as it were, illumined from within. In fact, he will observe some images which seem to be continually creating their colour-light from within, and which therefore are not

only fully illuminated and transparent, but are continually raying forth light. He will refer the opaque images to a lower order of creation, and the transparent ones to intermediate entities, while those which radiate light from within may be taken as manifestations of higher spiritual beings.

If we would arrive at the truth about the world of Imagination, we must not form too narrow a conception of spiritual sight. For in that world there are not only perceptions of light and colour, which may be compared with the sight-experiences of the physical world, but also impressions of heat and cold, taste and smell, and yet other experiences of imaginative "sense" to which there is no analogy in the physical world. Impressions of heat and cold are, in the imaginative or astral world, manifestations of the

will and purpose of psychic and spiritual beings. Whether such a being is of good or bad intent is apparent in a certain effect of heat and cold. Astral beings can also be "tasted" or "smelt." Only that which constitutes in a real sense the physical element of sound and colour is almost entirely lacking in the true imaginative world. In this respect absolute stillness reigns there. But in place thereof, something quite different is offered to one who is making progress in spiritual observation, something which may be compared with sound and vibration, speech and music, in the world of sense. And this higher something enters only when every sound and tone from the outer physical world is wholly silenced,—in fact, when even the lightest psychic echo of anything in the outer world is silenced also. Then there comes to the observation what may

be called an understanding of the meaning of imaginative experiences.

If we wish to compare what is now felt with anything in the physical world, we can only suggest as an illustration something which does not exist there. If we could imagine that we could perceive the thoughts and feelings of a person without hearing his words by the physical ear, such a perception might be compared with the direct understanding by the imaginative faculty which is designated "hearing" in the spiritual sense. In that world, colour and light impressions are speech. As the images grow bright or dull in colour, harmonies or discords are formed which reveal the feelings, ideas, and thoughts of psychic and spiritual entities. And just as sound grows into speech in the physical man when thought is impressed upon him, so do the harmonies and dis-

cords of the spiritual world come into manifestation as the actual thoughts of these beings. And of course darkness must fall upon the outer world if such thought is to be directly revealed.

The following experience thus presents itself. We see the bright shades of colour —red, yellow, and orange—fade away, and the higher world grow darker, through green, to blue and violet, at the same time we feel an increase of will-power in ourselves. We experience complete freedom with regard to time and space; we feel that we are in motion. We are conscious of certain linear forms and shapes, yet not as though we saw them drawn in space, but rather as if we ourselves were following every curve and form with our ego in continuous movement. In fact we feel that the ego is at once the draughtsman and the material with which they

are drawn; and every turn of the line, every change of place, is equally an experience of the ego. We learn to recognise that we with our ego set in motion are bound up with the creative forces of the world. The laws of the world are no longer something outwardly perceived by the ego, but a real web of wonder which he is helping to weave. Occult Science sketches out for us all kinds of symbolic drawings and pictures. When these really correspond to facts and are not merely figures of invention, they are founded on the observer's experiences in higher worlds, which are seen in the manner described above.

Thus does the world of Inspiration take its place within the Imaginative world. When the imaginings begin to reveal their meanings to the observer in silent language, the world of Inspira-

tion is opening within the Imaginative world.

The physical world is a manifestation of that other world which the spiritual observer penetrates in this way. That part of the physical world which is perceptible by the senses, and by the understanding which is limited by them, is in fact only the outside of it. To take a single example: a plant, as it is observed by the physical senses and understanding, is not the total being of the plant. He who knows only the physical plant is in a similar position to one who could perceive the finger-nail of a man, but to whom the man himself was inaccessible. The nature and construction of the finger-nail, can be understood only when explained by the whole human being. So, in reality, the plant is only comprehensible when that is known which pertains to it

as the whole man pertains to the finger-nail. That which makes up the total plant cannot be discovered in the physical world. To begin with, there is something fundamental in the plant which can only be revealed by the imaginative faculty in the astral world, and something yet further which can only be manifested through Inspiration in the spiritual world. Thus the plant as a physical organism is the revelation of a being to be understood by means of Imagination and Inspiration.

It is evident from what has gone before that a path opens before the observer in the higher worlds which has its beginning in the world of sense. That is to say, he can start from the physical world and ascend from its manifestations to the higher beings behind them. If he starts from the animal kingdom, he can rise into the Imaginative world. If he makes the

plant his point of departure, spiritual observation will lead him through Imagination to the world of Inspiration. If this path is followed, there will soon be found within both those worlds beings and facts not revealed at all in the physical world. We must not, however, think that in this way we become acquainted only with such beings of the higher worlds as have their manifestations in the physical. A man who has once entered the Imaginative world comes into contact with a number of beings and events of which the merely physical observer never dreams.

There is another method, which does not make the physical world its point of departure, and which also makes a man directly clairvoyant in the higher regions. To many persons this method might be more attractive than the one above indi-

cated; but in our present-day conditions of life the path upward from the physical world is rather to be chosen. It imposes upon the observer the self-renunciation which is necessary, if he is first of all to look around him in the physical world and gather some sort of knowledge, and more particularly some experience there. And, indeed, in any case, it is the method best suited to our present-day conditions of culture.

The other way presupposes the preliminary acquisition of qualities of the soul extremely difficult to attain under modern conditions of life. Even though such qualities have again and again been strongly and clearly insisted upon in writings on this subject, yet the majority of people have no idea—or at most, a very inadequate one—of the extent to which these qualities (for example, unselfishness

and self-sacrificing love) must be acquired if they would attain to the higher worlds without starting from the sure ground of the physical. And if a person awakes in the higher worlds without having attained, to the extent necessary, the corresponding qualities of the soul, unspeakable misery must be the consequence.

It must on no account be thought that the qualities mentioned above can be dispensed with in cases where the start is made from the physical world; to imagine this would be a false deduction. But such a beginning allows for the gradual acquisition of these qualities in the degree —and above all in the form—practicable under our present conditions of life.

Another thing in this connection has to be taken into account. If we start from the physical world in the manner indicated, we remain, notwithstanding our

ascent into the higher worlds, in close touch with the physical plane. We keep intact our full understanding of all that is going on in it, and all our energy for working there. Indeed, this understanding and energy increase in a most helpful way in consequence of our knowledge of the higher worlds. In every department of life, even in what seems most prosaic and practical, the knower of the higher worlds will work better and more usefully than the ignorant man, if only the former has kept himself in living touch with the physical world.

The man, however, who awakens in the higher spheres without starting from the physical, is only too readily estranged from outward life; he becomes a hermit, confronting his contemporaries without understanding or sympathy. Indeed, it often happens that people who are imper-

fectly developed in this way (of course not those who are fully evolved) look down with a certain contempt on the experiences of the physical world and imagine themselves superior to them. Instead of having their sympathy with the world increased, such people harden themselves and become selfish in the spiritual sense of the word. The temptation to do this is by no means small, and those who are striving to attain to the higher worlds will do well to be on their guard against it.

From Inspiration the spiritual observer may rise to Intuition. In the phraseology of Occult Science this word denotes in many respects the exact opposite of that to which it is often applied in ordinary life. People speak of Intuition as if they had in their mind some idea dimly felt to be true, but lacking any clear and exact confirmation. It is seen as a pre-

liminary step towards knowledge, rather than knowledge itself. An idea of this kind may—according to that definition—illuminate a great truth like a flash of lightning, but it can only become knowledge when confirmed by accurate judgment. Again, by Intuition is generally denoted something which is "felt" as truth, and of which a person is quite convinced, but which he will not encumber with intellectual judgment. People who are acquiring a knowledge of Occult Science often say: That was always clear to me "intuitively." But we must put all this entirely aside if we would fix our attention on the true meaning which the term Intuition here implies. In this connection Intuition is a mode of cognition which is in no way inferior in clearness to intellectual knowledge, but far surpasses it.

The experiences of the higher worlds reveal their meaning through Inspiration. The observer lives in the qualities and actions of the beings pertaining to those worlds. When he follows with his ego, as described above, the direction of a line, or the shape of a figure, he knows at the same instant that he is not within the being itself, but within its qualities and functions. He has already experienced in Imaginative knowledge the feeling of being no longer outside, but inside the colour-images, but at the same time he understands no less clearly that these colour-images are not themselves independent beings, but only the qualities of such beings. In Inspiration, he is conscious of becoming one with the deeds of such beings, and with the manifestations of their will; in Intuition, for the first time, he merges his own personality into that of

self-contained beings. This can happen in the right way only when the blending takes place, not through the effacement, but with the full preservation of his own being. Any "losing of oneself" in another being is wrong. Therefore only an ego which is fortified within itself to a very high degree can with impunity plunge into the being of another.

Something has been realised intuitively for the first time when the feeling arises with regard to it that some being is finding expression therein who is of the same nature as one's own ego. A man who observes a stone with his outer senses and seeks to understand its qualities by his reason, and by the usual scientific methods, gets to know only the outside of the stone. As a spiritual observer he then proceeds to Imaginative and Inspirational knowledge. If he dwell inwardly in the

latter, he may arrive at a further perception, which may be described by comparison in the following way. Let us suppose that we see a person in the street, who at first makes only a fleeting impression on us. Afterwards we get to know him better, then a time arrives when we become such friends that soul reveals itself to soul. With such an experience, when the veils of the soul fall away and one ego sees the other face to face, we may compare what happens when the stone first appears to the spiritual observer as an outward appearance only, and he ultimately reaches something to which the stone belongs, just as the finger-nail belongs to the human body, and which lives its life as an ego after the same fashion as our own inner self.

The kind of knowledge which takes us into the innermost nature of beings is first

attained in Intuition. Something has already been said with regard to Inspiration as to the change which must be brought about in the inner psychic condition of the spiritual observer if he wishes to attain this mode of cognition. It has been stated, for instance, that an inaccurate conclusion must not affect the intellect only, but the feelings also, and must cause pain and grief. And the observer must systematically cultivate that kind of inward life. Of course, so long as such pain springs only from the sympathies or antipathies of the ego, and from partiality, it cannot be spoken of as an adequate preparation for Inspiration. Such mental contacts are very far removed from the inner sympathy which the ego must feel for pure truth, as truth, if he would attain the goal in question. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that

all forms of interest which prevail in ordinary life, as pleasure or pain in relation to truth or error, must first be silenced, and then a totally different interest, wholly free from self-seeking, must enter in, if any glimpse is to be had of Inspirational Knowledge. This quality of the inner spiritual life is, however, only one of the means of preparing for Inspiration. A great number of others must be added. And the more the spiritual observer purifies himself with regard to what has already served him for Inspiration, the nearer he will be able to approach to Intuition.

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHY

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT STUTTGART
ON AUGUST 17, 1908

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION BY A.B.

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOSOPHY

AFTER having come to the close of a long course of purely Theosophic Lectures, we will to-day assume a different tone. I must therefore ask you, from the very outset, to take into consideration that to-day's address is not in the actual sense a Theosophic one, and that the purely philosophic tone which must be adopted may, to such as are unaccustomed to this mode of thought, seem somewhat abstract and difficult.

I have a definite reason for this departure: it is, that again and again, and more especially in those circles possessing, or believing themselves to possess, a certain amount of philosophic training, the opinion must arise (and I use the word "must"

advisedly) that Theosophy is tolerable only to persons who have been unable to pursue their philosophic, or scientific, studies beyond a certain point of amateurishness. It might easily be presumed in such circles that a person possessing thorough philosophic training, and acquainted with what are the foundations of scientific assumptions and convictions, could from the very beginning never concern himself with all those fantasies presumably accepted as "higher experiences;" that such things could but appeal to those who were as yet unripe for philosophic thought.

Now, in order to ascertain to what this opinion is due, we will, for once in a way, ourselves take a survey of the activities of Philosophy. This can be done only in a perfunctory manner to-day, giving the merest indications; but when on some

future occasion I may have the opportunity of speaking in a more detailed manner about these things, you will be in a position to see for yourselves that such indications have been drawn from a great context.

Philosophy has been generally regarded, by those who concern themselves with the subject, as something absolute, not as something which was bound to come into existence in the course of the development of mankind.

It is, however, precisely when dealing with the Science of Philosophy that we are in a position to show, by means of external historic documents, the time at which it had its origin in the evolution of mankind. Now that time has been fairly well determined, and more especially so by the older interpreters of the History of Philosophy. In all such presentations you will

find that a beginning is made with Thales, and from him onwards in continuity down to our times.

A few newer writers on the History of Philosophy, desirous of appearing more particularly erudite and clever, have, it is true, attempted to place the beginning of Philosophy at a more remote date, dragging in all kinds of material from the early "Wisdom" teaching. All this, however, is due to a particular form of dilettanteism, wholly ignorant of the fact that everything that preceded it in the "Wisdom" study of India, Egypt, and Chaldea, was in point of method entirely different in origin from purely philosophic thought, with its leaning towards the speculative. This form first developed in the Greek world of thought, and there the first to engage our attention in this respect certainly is Thales.

We have no need to occupy ourselves with the characteristics of the various Greek philosophers from Thales onward; neither need we concern ourselves with Anaxagoras, Herakleitos, Anaximenes, nor yet with Socrates or Plato. We may begin at once with the personality who represented the very first philosopher *κατ' ἐξοχήν* (par excellence), and that was Aristotle.

All other philosophies are in reality but abstractions based upon the Mystery Wisdom; of Thales and Herakleitos this could easily be proved. Neither Plato nor Pythagoras is a Philosopher in the actual sense of the word, the sources of both being in seership; since Philosophy, when characterised as such, does not depend upon the ideas which a man expresses, but is determined rather by the sources whence he derives his information.

Pythagoras found his sources in the Ancient Mystery Wisdom, and translated the knowledge thus acquired into definitions. He was a Seer, only it came to pass that what he saw as seer he clothed in philosophic garb; and the same was the case with Plato.

But what constitutes the Philosopher, and what we happen to meet with for the first time in Aristotle is this, that he works out for himself a science of definitions, and of necessity either rejects all other sources, or has no access to them. And since this is found for the first time in Aristotle, there is no lack of historical reason for stating that it was precisely he who founded Logic, the Science of Thinking. Everything else had been of a precursory nature only. The manner in which notions occur to us, in which our opinions are formed and our conclusions

drawn,—all this was first set forth by Aristotle as a kind of Natural History dealing with subjective human thought, and everything with which we come in contact when dealing with him is closely associated with these foundations of Thought Method. As we shall have to revert to these things, which in his case are of fundamental importance for all later aspects of the subject, it needs no more than this historical intimation in order to characterise the point of departure in a few words.

For later times also Aristotle remains the representative Philosopher. The outcome of what he accomplished permeated not only the later Aristotelian period of antiquity, up to the founding of Christianity, but from the dawn of Christianity onward to the Middle Ages it was to him that all turned in their efforts to formu-

late a Conception of the Universe. By this we do not mean to say that men had Aristotle's philosophy before them as a system, as a collection of dogmas (especially in the Middle Ages, a time when the original manuscripts were not attainable). Yet they had, through his influence, acquired the way in which, by the aid of a purely technical form of conception, they might rise to the highest Divine Knowledge. And thus it came to pass that Aristotle was more and more regarded as the teacher of Logical Thought.

It was somewhat in this way that a person in the Middle Ages would have put the matter to himself. Wherever the positive perception of the world *as a Fact* may come from, be it due to man's examination of external realities by means of his senses, or, be it due to Revelation by Divine Grace, through Christ Jesus, these

things have simply to be accepted: on the one hand as the deposition of the senses; on the other as Revelation. Should we, however, desire to substantiate this or that by pure definition, then, we must have recourse to that system of thought instituted by Aristotle.

And in very truth, of such value and importance has been the work done by Aristotle in framing this Thought Method that Kant was but right in declaring that "since the time of Aristotle Logic has not advanced by so much as a single sentence." In all essentials, indeed, this statement may be endorsed at the present day. Nowadays too, the fundamental teachings embodying a logical system of thought will be found to remain almost unaltered, if compared with what Aristotle set down: such matter as persons may be inclined to add at the present day

is the outcome of a somewhat amateurish attitude, assumed even in philosophic circles, in relation to the conception of Logic.

Now it was not alone the study of Aristotle, but above all the finding one's way into his Method of Thought, that became of immediate moment for the central period of the Middle Ages, or for the Early Scholastic Era, as we may also term it, when Scholasticism was in its prime,—a period which came to a close with Thomas Aquinas, in the thirteenth century.

Speaking of this time of Early Scholasticism, it must be clearly understood that at the present day allusion to it can only be made, in terms of philosophy, if unhampered by all authority and all dogmatic belief. It is, indeed, more difficult nowadays to speak of these things

purely objectively, than disparagingly, for, when speaking with disparagement, we do not encounter the danger of being dubbed "heretics" by so-called "free" thinkers: but, in speaking objectively, we run the chance of being misunderstood, the reason for this being that in the present day an ecclesiastical movement of a positive and most intolerant kind has based its appeal upon totally misunderstood Thomism. What to-day stands for orthodox catholic Philosophy should in no wise affect us; nevertheless we should be just as little disconcerted by the reproach we may possibly have to encounter, that we ourselves are concerned with what is both followed and advised in dogmatic quarters. Let us rather seek to characterise, regardless of aught else that may impose itself on our attention, the attitude of Scholasticism

at its zenith towards Science, Thought Method, and Supernatural Revelation.

Early Scholasticism does not allow of the characterisation usually applied to it in these days. Early Scholasticism is Monism, and not in the remotest sense of a dualistic nature. To it the world's Primal Source is undoubtedly a Unity: only that for the recognising of the Primitive Element the Scholastic employs a special kind of perception. He says: "There is a certain property of supersensual Truth that has primarily been revealed to Humanity." "Human Thought has in spite of all its efforts not yet been able to press through to those regions whose existence is the subject-matter of the highest revealed wisdom."

Thus, there existed for the early Scholastics a certain fund of Wisdom to which

by no method of thought could they immediately attain: *it becomes only attainable in so far as the thought is capable of interpreting that which has been revealed.*

This portion of the Wisdom, then, the thinker is bound to accept as revelation, using his thought power for its interpretation only. All that man can evolve from his own inner consciousness has its being only in certain subordinate regions of Reality, and here the Scholastic has recourse to active thought in pursuit of his research. He pushes forward up to certain limits where Revealed Wisdom meets him. Thus the contents of his own research and revelation unite in an objective unified and monistic conception of the universe. That a *kind of dualism*, owing to human limitations, is associated with the matter, is of only secondary importance: it concerns a dualism of per-

ception, not a dualism of Cosmic Causes.

The Scholastic therefore explains thought method as a means of being able rationally to elaborate that which empirical science acquires by the observation of the senses, as well as a means of helping to penetrate further, even into Spiritual Truth. And here the Scholastic, in all humility, presents a portion of that Wisdom as "Revelation," not as discovered by himself, but as that which he is called upon to accept.

Now the special method of thought here used by the Scholastics had most emphatically sprung from a basis of Aristotelian Logic. There was, in fact, a twofold necessity for the early Scholastics (whose period came to an end with the thirteenth century) to concern themselves with Aristotle. The first necessity was due to historical developments: Aristotelianism

had become acclimatised: the second necessity arose from the fact that, as time went on, an enemy to Christianity sprang up in another quarter.

The teachings of Aristotle had not found expansion in the Occident only, but in Oriental lands also, and everything that found its way into Spain by means of the Arabs, and which thence penetrated still farther into Europe, was, in as far as "thought method" was concerned, permeated with Aristotelianism.

More especially was this the case with that particular form of Philosophy known as Natural Science, which embracing Medicine, had also been imported, and which was in the most emphatic sense Aristotelian. Now an opinion had been formed that nothing but a kind of Pantheism could be the consistent outcome of Aristotelian teaching, which, especially as

to its philosophy, had evolved itself from a very vague mysticism.

There was, therefore, in addition to this special reason,—the fact that Aristotle's influence still animated thought method,—yet another reason for men to concern themselves with his teachings, for, in the interpretation placed upon them by the Arabs, Aristotle is made to appear as the opponent and foe of Christianity.

What we have to ask ourselves is this:—Were the ideas which the Arabs imported as the interpretation of Aristotle a true interpretation? Aristotelianism would then indeed be a scientific basis adapted to contradict the teachings of Christianity. Now let us picture to ourselves what in face of such conclusions must have been the feelings of the Scholastics: upon the one side they adhered firmly to the truth of Christianity, yet upon the

other they were bound by all their traditions to acknowledge nothing less than the Thought Method of Aristotle—namely, Logic—as true and correct.

And out of this dissension arose the task of the Scholastics: the proving that even while philosophising it was still possible to apply the Logic of the Greek sage, aye, that it was exactly he who had provided the instrument by means of which Christianity could really be conceived and understood. It was a task which owed its inception to the development of that day. Aristotelianism had to be treated in such a manner as to make it evident that what the Arabs had imported and put forward as the teachings of Aristotle was only to be considered as erroneous when it showed a tendency inimical to Christianity; that, in short, one had but to interpret him correctly in

order to find in his philosophy a basis for the true conception of the Christian religion. And this was the task Scholasticism set itself, to the achievement of which the entire writings of the Thomists were devoted.

Now, however, something else happened. When the day of Scholasticism had drawn to its close, there occurred in the course of time a complete rupture along the whole philological line of evolution in human thought. The most natural thing would have been (and be it understood that this is not put forward in any sense as a criticism—it is not even suggested that it *could* have happened in this wise, for the actual course taken was the *absolutely necessary* one, the case therefore is put thus hypothetically)—the most natural thing would have been to have expanded Thought Method even

further, so that ever higher and higher portions of the supersensual world should have been grasped by thought. But the next development was not this. The fundamental Thought which, with Thomas Aquinas, for instance, was applicable to the highest and most exalted regions, and which might have been so developed that the limits of human research would have been enlarged, embracing ever remoter and higher realms, this fundamental Thought became distorted to a caricature of itself, its existence prolonged in a conviction only. The highest spiritual truths withdraw themselves entirely from the area of purely human thought activity, from any elaboration into definitions.

By such means a division occurred in man's spiritual life. Supersensual knowledge was regarded as something inaccessible to every effort of human thought, as

something that could not be attained to by any subjective effort based on knowledge, but that was compelled to have its roots in Faith.

This tendency was evinced in earlier times, but it ran to extremes towards the close of the Middle Ages, as the division between the faith that had been attained by subjective conviction and the faith that, as the foundation of a sound judgment, had to be the result of logical activity, became more and more accentuated.

It was but natural that before this yawning chasm Knowledge and Belief were forced further apart, nor was it unnatural that Aristotle and his method of thought should have been dragged in to fill up the gap occasioned by historical developments. This was done more especially at the beginning of the Modern

Era. Thus upon the one side men of science maintained—(and here I am quite ready to admit that much of what they said may be regarded as reasonable enough)—that no mere spinning out of what had already been placed on record by Aristotle could lead to any advance in the search for empirical Truth.

Besides this, the sequence of historical events showed that it might be inadvisable to make common cause with the followers of Aristotle; for, indeed, as the time of Keppler and Galileo approached, misconceived Aristotelianism had become a veritable plague in the land.

It has proved to be the case again and again that those who called themselves adherents of some particular conception of the Universe have, times out of number, destroyed an incalculable amount of that which the founders themselves had

presented in the right way. Instead of looking to Nature herself, instead of bringing observation to bear, it was, at the end of the Middle Ages, found easier to make use of the old books of Aristotle, dwelling, at all academic lectures, entirely on the written letter of the Greek Logician.

The following story is characteristic of this habit. An orthodox Aristotelian had been invited to see for himself, by assisting at the autopsy of a body, how utterly he had misconceived the sense of Aristotle in maintaining that the nerves proceeded from the heart, when, as a matter of fact, the nervous system had its centre in the brain. Yet, in spite of ocular demonstration, the Aristotelian's reply was: "Observation certainly shows me that this is actually the case, but Aristotle states the reverse, and I have

greater faith in him." Thus it will be seen that followers of Aristotle had become a positive nuisance. It was imperative for empirical science to rid itself of this false Aristotelianism and base its authority upon pure experience, and we find the strongest impulse in this direction given by the great Galileo.

On the other side an entirely different development took place. Those who, so to speak, sought to save their Faith from this threatened invasion of independent thought, developed a kind of aversion to Logic. They were of opinion that this method of thought was powerless in the presence of Revealed Wisdom, and when the worldly empirics supported their assertions by referring to the books of Aristotle, their opponents confronted them with arguments they had taken from a different, but, of course, equally

misunderstood Book, namely, the Bible. This was more particularly the case in the beginning of the New Era, as we may gather from Luther's bitter words apostrophising Reason as "a deaf and purblind fool," that should have naught to do with Spiritual Truths, adding further that a pure conviction of faith can never be kindled by such means as reasoned thought founded upon Aristotle, to whom he applies such opprobrious names as: "Hypocrite," "Sycophant," and "Stinking Goat." These are indeed hard words, but when considered from the standpoint of that new era they may be better understood.

What had taken place was that a deep chasm had opened between Reason and its allied Thought Method on the one hand, and supersensual Truth on the other; and this chasm has found its final

expression in the person of a philosopher whose influence has, as it were, caught the nineteenth century in a web from which it finds some difficulty in extricating itself; this philosopher is Kant. He is, virtually, the last adherent of opinions resulting from that division which occurred in the Middle Ages.

He made a marked division between Faith and that to which man is capable of attaining by means of Knowledge. Externally, "The Critic of Pure Reason" stands, as it were, side by side with "The Critic of Practical Reason," and Practical Reason ever seeks to acquire what may be termed a standpoint of rationalistic thought, as opposed to that which may be termed knowledge. On the other hand, Theoretical Reason, as advanced by Kant, is stigmatised most emphatically as incapable of realising the Actual

—the "thing in itself" (*Das Ding an sich*). The "thing in itself" makes impressions upon man, it is true. These, however, can live only in man's self-representation, in his own concepts of such impressions. Now, we should be obliged to delve deep down into the history of the philosophy of Kant should we desire to characterise his distinctive fundamental error, but this would lead us too far away from our present object; moreover I have already dealt with it in my book entitled *Truth and Science* (*Wahrheit und Wissenschaft*).

What is of far more interest to us at the present moment is this "web" in the meshes of which the philosophic thought of the nineteenth century has found itself entangled. Let us enquire how this came about.

Kant felt above all things the necessity of demonstrating to what extent some-

thing *absolute* might be connected with the process of thinking; something, that is to say, concerning which there could be no uncertainty, "for," said he, "all that has its origin in experience is of uncertain quality." Our judgment can derive certainty only from that factor in recognition which originates with ourselves,—not from external things or objects.

We see things, or objects, therefore, in the Kantian sense, as through a coloured glass; and within ourselves we gather recognition of these things in their lawful connection, dependent upon our own consciousness. Our faculty of recognition has certain conventions, those of space and time, as well as of cause and effect: these have no meaning for the "thing in itself," at least we have no knowledge as to whether the "thing in

itself" has any existence in space, time, or causation. These are conventions which arise only in the subjective mind of man, and which he evolves concerning the "thing in itself" in the moment of its appearing to him, so that the "thing in itself" remains unknown to him. Whereever, therefore, the "thing in itself" confronts man, he clothes it with the conventions of space and time, and applies to it the law of cause and effect, casting his entire network of concepts and conventions about the "thing in itself." For which reason man may be said to have a certain surety of knowledge, since, as long as he *is as he is*, Time, Space, and Causation possess a meaning for him. And what man puts into things he has to extract from them again. Nevertheless, he is unable to know what the "thing in itself" is, for he stands for ever baffled

before his Idea of it. Schopenhauer recognised this, and has placed his conviction upon record in those classic words of his: "The World is my Conception."

Now the sum of these conclusions has been carried over into the entire thought of the nineteenth century, not only in regard to the Theory of Cognition, but also as affecting the theoretical groundwork of Physiology, and here certain experiences contributed their aid.

If we look at the doctrine concerning the specific energies of the senses there would seem to be a corroboration of the Kantian opinion. At all events, that is how the matter was regarded during the nineteenth century.

Thus any one might say: "The eye perceives light:" yet if the eye is affected by some other means, say by pressure, or by an electric shock, it also becomes aware of

light. Hence it was said: "The perception of light is generated by means of the specific energy of the eye and transferred to the 'thing in itself.'"

More especially did Helmholtz in the crudest manner lay this down as a physiological-philosophical axiom, declaring: "All we perceive cannot be supposed to have even so much as a pictorial resemblance to those things which are exterior to us. The picture has a semblance of that which it represents, but that which we call perception cannot have so close a resemblance to the original as has the picture. Therefore," he further continues, "that which man experiences within himself cannot be otherwise expressed than by calling it a symbol of the 'thing in itself,' for a symbol need have no actual resemblance to the thing it expresses." Thus, what had long been in

preparation entered so completely into the philosophic thought of our times that men became incapable of perceiving, incapable of even thinking, that the truth of the matter might be otherwise.

For such reasons Eduard von Hartmann was quite unable to find a way out of his own web of definitions. For instance, in a conversation I once had with him, it was absolutely impossible to get beyond this: "We must," he said, "surely proceed from the conception, and when we define the conception we have to say that it is that by means of which man is enabled to perceive the non-conceivable (*ein Nichtvorgestelltes*)!" And yet, if the conception from which we must proceed is something subjective we are again unable to get beyond the subjective. It did not seem to occur to him that he had, in the first place, constructed this defini-

tion, and now found himself unable to escape from his own carefully arranged structure. Indeed, the whole of his *Transcendental Realism* rests upon his having enmeshed himself within a web of his own making, and one which he takes to be an objective truth.

Along these lines no one can get beyond the statement that, "what I conceive with my perception never goes beyond the confines of the 'thing in itself': it is therefore only subjective." This habit of thought has in the course of time become so firmly rooted that all those theorists who take to themselves credit for understanding Kant, now regard every other person as being of limited intelligence if he does not consider their definition of conceptions and of the subjective nature of observation to be the right one. And all this has been the result of that split which

I have already described as occurring in the spiritual development of humanity.

Now any one who really studied Aristotle would easily perceive how entirely different a conception, both as to principle and theory, might, in place of a distorted one, have been the result of a direct development onward from Aristotle.

Aristotle had already accepted, in the regions of theoretical perception, those ideas to which man in this day is but slowly and gradually ascending, through all that tangle of academic undergrowth which has been the outcome of the influence of Kant. We have, above all things, to learn to understand how it was possible for Aristotle, by means of his method of thought, to put forward definitions which are rightly conceived, and lead immediately to the overstepping of those self-imposed limits.

We need concern ourselves with no more than a few of the fundamental conceptions propounded by Aristotle in order to recognise this. It is entirely in conformity with his views to say, "If we analyse the things about us, we find in the first place that what provides us with a conception of these things is the fact that we perceive them with our senses: sense presents each separate thing to us." If, however, we begin to think, the things group themselves; we gather divers things together into a unit of thought. And here Aristotle finds the right relationship between unity of thought and objective reality—the objectiveness that leads to the "thing in itself"—in showing that when we are thinking consistently we are bound to imagine the world of experience about us as composed of matter and what he terms form.

Matter and Form are to Aristotle two conceptions which he defines in the only true sense in which they permit of definition. We might go on talking for hours, if we wished to exhaust these two conceptions, together with all they involve. Still we may at least contribute a certain portion of what is elementary to this subject, so as to understand what it is that Aristotle defines as Form and Matter.

He is confident himself that with respect to all things immediately about us, —the things that make up our world of experience,—the conception of all these things depends upon an apprehension of Form, since it is *Form* that gives to objects their reality, not Matter. The Form is to Aristotle the Reality.

There are even in our day persons endowed with a true comprehension of

Aristotle. Dr. Vinzenz Knauer, who in the 'eighties was lecturer at the University of Vienna, explained to those attending his classes the difference between Matter and Form, and upon what this difference depended, illustrating his meaning in a forcible if somewhat grotesque way.

"Imagine," he said, "that for a considerable portion of his existence a wolf had eaten nothing but lambs: would he not practically consist of lamb only? And yet, no wolf ever becomes a lamb!" This, if only rightly followed up, points out the difference between Matter and Form. Is the wolf a wolf by reason of Matter? No! His being has been imposed upon him by his Form, and his Form is not the form of this particular wolf alone, but that common to all wolves. Thus, by means of conception, we find Form to be something universal, in contradistinction

to that which the senses are able to conceive of separately.

According to the meaning of Aristotle we can distinguish accurately, by means of a true theory of conception, what is universal, in three ways. We can say: this universal is the actual, is *that* whereon it depends. But is that which has its being in human thought the same as that which we, in the true sense, allude to as Form? No. Man, approaching those separate wolves, perceives what is common to all wolves from a study of these single examples of the species. Nevertheless, that which he here conceives of as a something made up of certain similar characteristics is but the representation of what is actually universal.

(All this can of course be but suggested in the most fragmentary way.)

We have therefore to differentiate: a

"Universal" which is *anterior* to those units confronting us externally; next, since this is the essential: a "Universal" comprised within these units; and further: a third form of the "Universal" which man subsequently evolves from out his own thoughts.

We have therefore:

1. *Universalia ante rem.*
2. *Universalia in re.*
3. *Universalia post rem.*

The latter unroll themselves within the subjective mind and are "objectively-real universals" representing our inner experiences.

Until we approach these threefold differences, no right conception can be arrived at, upon this basis, with regard to that which is important here. For only consider for a moment what is involved.

What is involved is the conception that man, in so far as he remains within the "*Universalia post rem*," is possessed of a subjective. Yet at the same time something intrinsic is implied, namely, that man's conception is a "representation" of that which as actual form (Entelechy)[1] has universal duration, and into this "*Universalia in re*" such things only have entered because as "*Universalia ante rem*" they already existed prior to those objects.

Thus we have a *Universalia ante rem* which we must accept in the Deity, as existent in the Wisdom of God.

The Christian Theologist, the Scholastic, conceived this in a similar manner, the only difference being that he did not ascend directly to the Highest Divinity. As Theosophists, we are aware

[1] *Greek*, meaning the actual being of a thing as opposed to simple capability or potentiality.

that the *Universalia in re*, when dealing, for instance, with brute creation, means the "group souls," and thus we have in Aristotelianism actually a fundamentalising of that which Theosophy is able to support by definition.

There is, however, in addition to all that we meet with in Aristotle, something else that has become increasingly antipathetic to these modern times. It is this: that it is imperative for us to habituate ourselves to thinking in concise and finely chiselled forms of definition; in conceptions that we have first carefully prepared; and it is necessary, in order to do this, that we should have the patience to advance from conception to conception; above all things, also, that we employ clearness and neatness of definition; that we be aware of what we are speaking of when we use a definition. If, for instance,

in the Scholastic sense, we speak of the relation of a conception to that which it represents, we are obliged in the first place to work our way through the lengthy definitions in the writings of the Scholastics. We must understand what is meant when we find it stated that the idea is, as to form, grounded in the subject, and has its foundation based on the object: that which defines the actual appearance of the idea being derived from the subject, whilst what it contains is derived from the object. This is but a small example,—a very small one; for, if you were to go through the works of the Scholastics, you would have to labour through ponderous volumes of definitions, a matter which would be exceedingly tedious to the scientist of to-day,—for which reason he looks upon the Scholastics as learned humbugs and leaves them

severely alone. He is quite unaware that true Scholasticism is nothing else than the careful elaboration of the Art of Thinking, in order that this may form a foundation for a true conception of the Real.

And when I state this you will understand what an immense boon it will be if efforts should arise within the Theosophical Society which should, in the very best sense, have for their object the elaboration of the principles governing the Theory of Perception. And as here in Stuttgart we happen to have in Dr. Unger a worker of exceptional importance in this field of labour, we may well regard it as a proof of a favourable tendency apparent within the immediate confines of our movement. For this movement will not make its true depth felt in the world at large by appealing to those whose only

desire is to hear of facts concerning the Higher World, but by the labours of such as have the patience requisite to press forward into the intricacies of a Thought Method; who are possessed of definite motive for accomplishing solid work, such as provides the frame-work for yet further labours in the Higher World.

Thus, perhaps, it may come to pass that within the Theosophical movement—from out Theosophy itself—Scholasticism, twisted as it has been both by its adherents as well as its enemies into a grim caricature of itself, may once again be presented in such a manner as to be understood.

It is of course far easier to apply a few ready-made definitions to everything confronting us as a new truth,—far easier than to labour at constructing a solid foundation by means of a Method of Thought;

but what are the consequent results? Taking up a philosophical book of the present day one is left with a dubious impression: men no longer understand each other when conversing on higher matters; they are not clear in their own minds with regard to the definitions of which they make use. This could not have happened in the time of the Scholastics. In those days men were compelled to be accurate as to the form in which they clothed an idea.

As you may have perceived, there was at one time in very truth a Way by which to probe to the depths of a genuine Thought Method, and had this Path been pursued further, no one would have become entangled in the web of the Kantian "thing in itself," with its supposedly subjective conceptions.

Two results would then have been

attained. In the first place man would have arrived, within himself, at a reliable theory of conception, and in the second place, and this is of great importance, the accepted Centres of Learning could not have misunderstood so absolutely the great philosophers whose labours came after those of Kant.

Kant was succeeded by Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel,—what are they to the man of to-day? They are assumed to be philosophers who sought to present a world by means of purely abstract definitions. Such an idea never occurred to them.

But people were firmly imbued with the Kantian conception, and for that reason incapable of understanding the world's greatest philosophers, either relatively or philosophically.

Hegel spent his youth here in Stutt-

gart; the house where he lived stands opposite as you enter this street in which we are holding our present meetings. A tablet commemorates the fact. But only gradually will people ripen to an understanding of all that Hegel has given to the world, and only when they have emancipated themselves from this hampering self-woven web of theoretical conceptions will they be capable of understanding him.

Yet this would be so simple! It is only necessary to accustom oneself to a natural and unconstrained mode of thinking, and to free oneself from the tendencies now prevalent in philosophic literature, which, under the confusing influences of the Kantian School, have developed into set habits of thought.

We must ourselves be able to answer this question clearly: Is it really the case

that man, who proceeds from the subject, constructs his conception within the subject and then weaves that conception, as it were, about the object? Is this really so?

Yes, it is so.

But, does it follow as a consequent necessity that man is unable ever to penetrate into the "thing in itself"? I will put forward a simple example:

Imagine, for instance, that you have a seal, and upon that seal the name of Miller. Now, press your seal on to some sealing-wax, and again remove it.

Now you are, I take it, quite certain in your mind that this seal, being, let us say, of brass, no property of the brass will pass over into the wax. Were the sealing-wax conscious in the Kantian sense, it would say: "I am entirely wax; no brass passes over into me, I can there-

fore have no knowledge concerning the nature of that which has approached me."

And yet, one thing has here been left out of the question entirely—the very thing, moreover, that really counts! That is the name of "Miller" which remains objectively imprinted upon the sealing-wax, yet without any portion of the brass having adhered to it.

So long as people think and believe materialistically, that in order to establish a connection, matter is bound to pass over from the one to the other, just so long will they in theory maintain:

"I am sealing-wax, and that other is 'brass in itself'; and as none of the 'brass in itself' can enter me, therefore the name of 'Miller' can be no more than a sign. Although the 'thing in itself' that has impressed itself upon me,

so that I can read it, this 'thing in itself' remains unknown to me."

And there you have the final argument that is made to serve for all. Were we to continue this illustration, it would work out thus:

"Man is all sealing-wax (conception). The 'thing in itself' is all seal (that which is exterior to the conception).

"Now, as I, being wax (the person conceiving), can but attain to the outer surface of the seal, (the 'thing in itself') so nothing concerning the 'thing in itself' can reach me."

So long as people insist on carrying materialism and the theory of definition to these extremes, so long will they be unable to recognise that upon which the question depends.

The matter stands thus: We do not get beyond our conception, but that which is

transmitted to us may be defined as Spirit, and that stands in no need of material atoms for its transmission. Nothing of matter enters the subject, yet in spite of this, the idea transfers itself to the subject, as indeed was the case with the name of Miller on the sealing-wax.

It is from this point that the start towards a healthy study of the Theory of Definition must again be made, and it will then be seen how much the materialism of recent times has (quite unconsciously to itself) acquired a hold upon the conceptions pertaining to the Theory of Knowledge.

The result of unprejudiced observation amounts to this: that Kant can only conceive a "thing in itself" materially,—grotesque as this statement may at first seem.

But in order to survey the case in its entirety, something further must be indicated. We have said that Aristotle has pointed out the fact that in everything surrounding us it becomes necessary to differentiate between what is Form (Entelechy), and what is Material. Now what we can say is this: that the process of conception takes us as far as the Form, in the sense above indicated. But, is there any possibility of reaching that which is the substance? For we must bear in mind that to Aristotle *material* means not alone matter, but also that substance which, though spirit, yet forms the bed-rock, as it were, of Reality. Is there any possibility, not only of conceiving that which, so to speak, "flows across," but of "creeping within" the interior of things, and so identifying oneself with matter? This is an important question with regard to the

Theory of Cognition, and it can be answered only by one who has immersed himself within the nature of thought, that is, of pure thought; and to the conception of pure thought man must first ascend.

Pure thought we can determine as Actuality, as indeed Aristotle himself did. It is pure Form, as it first presents itself and without context in respect to those separate and immediate objects which exist externally in the Reality of the senses. And why? Let us get a clear comprehension as to how pure conception comes into being, in contradistinction to perception.

Imagine some one desiring to form the conception of a circle. This can be done by going out to sea so far that nothing save water can be perceived around: you then by means of your perception form the conception of a circle. There is,

however, another way of arriving at the conception of a circle, and that is if, without appealing to the senses, you say to yourself: I will make a mental note of all those places which are equidistant from one particular spot. Now, this piece of mental construction which is carried on within yourself needs no appeal to anything external, and this is an example of pure thought, as Aristotle conceived it—of pure Actuality.

But here we are confronted by something of peculiar importance. Pure thought thus conceived fits in with experience; without it experience itself is inconceivable. Imagine Kepler evolving by means of a theory of pure conception such a system as shows the elliptical courses of the planets, in one of the foci of which the sun is situated, and then imagine observation by such means as the

telescope *subsequently confirming* that which previous experience had presented in the realms of pure thought!

Surely this clearly demonstrates to every unprejudiced thinker that Pure Thought is not without significance for Reality, for it is in accord with it. A discoverer such as Kepler illustrates by means of his actions that which Aristotelism has theoretically affirmed by means of methodical thought. He takes that which belongs to the *Universalia post rem*, and finds upon nearer approach that the *Universalia post rem* was even prior to this, that is to say, that it was already contained within itself as *Universalia ante rem*.

Now, if the Universalia be accepted in the right sense (not merely subjectively accepted, after the perverted sense), they will then reveal themselves objec-

tively in things, and to these ends they must first be formulated after the manner in which Aristotle conceived them as the very foundation of the world.

Thus you will find that what at first seems the most subjective and which was confirmed as independent of all experience, is after all that which in the most objective manner leads the way to the Actual. Now, what is the reason why the subjective could not reveal itself first in the world? The reason is that its way is barred by a "thing in itself."

When you construct a circle you do not knock up against any such obstruction, because you are living within the thing itself, though but formally so, to begin with.

The next question is, can we by means of such subjective thinking arrive at any kind of Reality, at aught that is perma-

nent? The point on which the whole matter hinges is that the subjective (as we have already characterised it) when constructed in thought, is a formation, that objectively presents itself as something additional. We may of course say that it is after all a matter of utter indifference to any circle, or to any sphere in this world whether we think of it, or not! Our thoughts concerning the Actual are matters of indifference to the surrounding world of experience. This exists in itself, quite irrespective of our thoughts. Our thinking may therefore be objective as far as we are concerned, and yet be of no moment to the thing.

How are we to get rid of this apparent contradiction? Where is the opposite pole we must now take hold of? Where is there a Way within the domain of Pure Thought by which we may conceive,

not alone the Form, but together with the Form also the Reality? For as soon as ever we have anything that *together with the form constitutes reality*, we then have a fixed point at which to set up our theoretical knowledge.

We are everywhere in the same position as in the case of the circle. When we construct the circle we can say: "What I know respecting this circle is objectively right, but whether it is applicable to 'things' depends on whether when I meet those things, they prove to me that they are subject to the laws which I myself have formulated." If the total of all Entelechy resolves itself into pure thought, then a residuum must remain, a residuum known to Aristotle as Matter, where it is not possible by the process of Pure Thought itself to reach Reality.

And on this point Aristotle may be corroborated by the philosopher Fichte. By the Aristotelian method we may arrive at the following formula: "Everything about us, including all things belonging to the invisible world, necessitates the postulating of a material in order to account for the formative Entelechy."

To Aristotle the idea of God is a pure Actuality, a pure act; that is to say, an act in which Actuality, that which is formulative, is at the same time endowed with power to bring forth its own material; not something that exists apart from the material, but something that by reason of its own activity is *one with the material.*

The image of such pure Actuality is to be found in man himself, when by pure thought he arrives at the definition of

the "I" (the Self—the Ego). In conceiving this "I" he has, according to Fichte, performed an act, or deed. He has within his own consciousness arrived at something, which, seeing he lives in Actuality, similarly brings forth both this Actuality and its material. Now, if we conceive this "I" in pure thought, we are then in a centre where pure thought brings forth, or evolves, the essentials for its own material being. If you conceive this "I" in thought, then a threefold "I" becomes apparent: the pure "I" belonging to the *Universalia ante rem;* an "I" wherein you yourself are, and which belongs to the *Universalia in re:* and an "I" which you conceive, and which belongs to the *Universalia post rem.* But here again is an important point: for the "I" is so constituted that when we elevate the mind to an actual conception

of it, the threefold "I" becomes merged into one.

In conceiving its true definition the "I" lives within itself, being able to exist as the reality in the definition. What is accomplished by pure thought is immaterial to the "I," for the pure thought is the creator of the "I."

Here the definition of the Creative coincides with that of the Material, and we have to acknowledge that, while in all other processes of conception we come to some limit, this is not the case with the "I." This we embrace in its innermost being when we enfold it in pure thought.

We may therefore by means of theoretical conception lay down this fundamental axiom, namely, "that by dint of pure thought a point is attainable where Reality and Subjectiveness are in

complete union, where, in short, man experiences Reality."

If one stops at this point, and allows one's thoughts so to fructify that they again evolve from out themselves, then has one grasped those things from within. There is, therefore, something in this "I" conceived, and at the same time created, by an effort of pure thought, an effort by which we force the boundary which has to be placed for all other things between Entelechy (Form) and Matter.

By such means, a theory of cognition logically pursued becomes something that can also, by means of pure thought, point the Way into Reality. If you pursue this Path, you are eventually bound to find that it leads to Theosophy. There are, however, but few philosophers who have any understanding of this Path. Most of them are entangled within their

self-spun web of definitions, and as they know the definition only as something abstract, never apprehending that point where it becomes the archetype of the creative, they are incapable of finding aught by means of which they may come into direct contact with the "thing in itself."

You see therefore what will be necessary before we can expect philosophers to cease regarding Theosophists as the merest *dilettanti*. Philosophers must first have philosophy enough to acknowledge the existence of a Philosophy that goes to the foundation of things. It is not really that Philosophy contradicts Theosophy, but rather that philosophers themselves do not understand Philosophy. They know nothing of the deeper foundations of Philosophy. They are blinded and lost in a labyrinth of their own theories

out of which they are unable to find an exit.

When once they extricate themselves from their present coil, they will find their way to Theosophy. It is not that Theosophy is really so amateurish a thing to the philosopher, since he cannot understand it;—what is far more to be accounted amateurish in the present day is the sort of philosophy which largely dominates the world. When at length this philosophy becomes capable of entering its true province of thought, then also will a bridge have been thrown across, spanning the gulf and leading from Philosophy to Theosophy.

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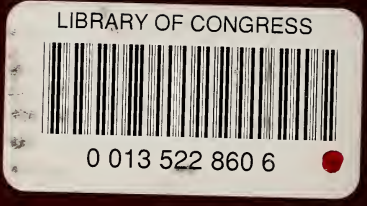
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